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Friday Review

With European weather

Tupac Shakur: death of a gangsta

Lyle Lovett on the fame game

Cover story

Music page 10

The bishop's secret son

Roman Catholic Church rocked by latest revelation about Bishop Wright

Madeline Bunting Religious Affairs Editor

THE Catholic church was in turmoil last night after the revelation that the former Bishop of Argyll and the Isles, who disappeared with a divorcee two weeks ago, has a 15-year-old son by another woman.

Joanna Whibley, aged 48, approached the BBC to describe in detail her relationship with the Rt Rev Roderick Wright when he was a curate in Fort William, and how he has refused to acknowledge his son, Kevin. Shortly before Bishop Wright disappeared, he phoned Ms Whibley and promised he would come and live with them after his resignation to "make amends" for the hurt he had caused.

The Scottish Catholic Church confirmed last night that Bishop Wright was the father of Kevin Whibley. Bishop Wright informed Cardinal Winning of the boy's existence at a meeting last Sunday night in Glasgow when he offered his resignation.

The church authorities were made aware of the fact that Roderick Wright was the father of a child known as Kevin Whibley, born in 1981, last Sunday evening, the Church said in a statement last night. "This was in fact one of the main reasons given for his resignation and was communicated to the Vatican with his resignation."

Father Tom Connelly, spokesman for the Catholic church in Scotland, told BBC Scotland he was devastated. "Clearly the news does an enormous amount of damage to the credibility of the Church, to the credibility of individual priests going about their legitimate business trying to conduct their pastoral affairs."

"And I am absolutely sure that many, many Catholics will be the butt of jokes and snip talk in offices, shops, workshops, colleges and universities."

The Church in Scotland made no reference to the boy at a press conference called on Monday afternoon to announce the bishop's resignation, but defended the omission on the grounds that "it was not for the church authorities to make such confidential information public".

Bishop Wright disappeared two weeks ago from his diocese, as did Kathleen Macphee, a divorced nurse with three children, with whom he has been friendly for nearly 30 years. Their whereabouts are unknown.

Ms Whibley fought back tears as she told on BBC TV how she and her son had kept the secret as her former lover moved up the church hierarchy. "I have lived a lie and so has he," she said from her home in Polzeath, East Sussex, but she denied there was any motive of revenge on hearing of his name linked with Ms Macphee.

"I must unburden myself and put an end to Kevin's feeling that he shouldn't even exist. Although Kevin knows it's his dad and Roddy knows he's his dad, he has been an absent father," she said.

Ms Whibley said Bishop Wright had cruelly betrayed her, keeping her hopes of eventual reconciliation alive until a few weeks ago, while all the time he was involved with another woman.

The name of Kevin's father was left off his birth certificate. He said he was tired at feeling awkward when his school friends asked him who his father was. He thought there were other children like him.

"I feel angry at the loss of a father and it's too late now. I don't even want him if he comes now. It is too late."

"I haven't seen him for more than two months put together in my whole life and it was useless then because I have been awkward talking to him. He didn't speak to me but that's probably because I was cold towards him."

According to a statement issued by the Catholic Media Office in London, Cardinal Basil Hume had no "prior knowledge" of what has been disclosed about the bishop in the news this evening. He was shocked and saddened to learn of it and he will make no further comment.

Cardinal Hume later added that he was very distressed. He said in an interview with



Joanna Whibley: 'I must unburden myself... I have lived a lie and so has he'

Chanel 4 news: "But my heart goes out, especially to Kevin and his mother, and also to those people let down by this."

The Catholic church will be subjected to a barrage of questions and criticism following a scandal likely to attract interest among Catholics abroad. The fact that a bishop was able to conceal a son for

15 years and gain promotion will draw accusations of hypocrisy and church officials admitted last night that the scandal will damage the credibility and authority of the church hierarchy.

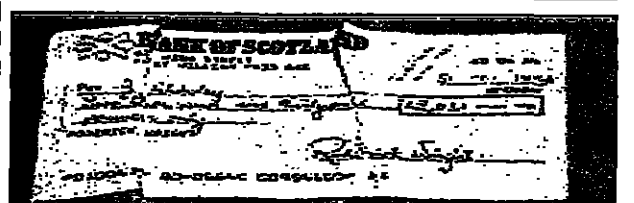
The Catholic church will be under intense pressure also to explain how Bishop Wright was able to send Ms Whibley large sums, most recently a

cheque of £2,000 last July. Bishops receive a stipend as little as £3,000 a year.

The moving revelations of Ms Whibley and the defiant anger of her son, Kevin, come at an embarrassing point after several days of intense debate about the Catholic church's requirement that all priests be celibate. Cardinal Hume and Cardinal Winning

have insisted that the case of Bishop Wright was a minor matter.

They also insisted that his circumstances did not call into question the celibacy required of all priests. Last night Cardinal Hume said he stood by his vigorous defence of celibacy and urged the Church to consider how it prepared its priests.



Kevin Whibley, top left, and his father Bishop Wright, who sent him money, most recently more than £2,000 last July

The end of 'the lie'

"I made up my mind in the night that I must unburden myself and start my life and put an end to Kevin's feeling that he should not even exist... I have lived a lie and so has he."

Joanna Whibley, 48, mother of Bishop Roderick Wright's son

"I am sure many Catholics will be the butt of jokes."

Fr Tom Donnelly, a church spokesman

"I feel angry at the loss of a father and it's too late now. I don't even want him if he comes now. It is too late... I haven't seen him for more than two months together in my whole life and it was useless because it was awkward talking to him. He didn't speak to me, probably because I was cold towards him."

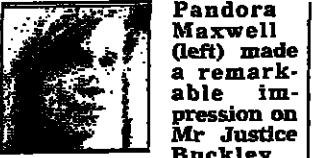
Kevin Whibley, 15

Maxwell goes free: so who did steal the £400m?

Dan Atkinson and Rebecca Smithers

DEMANDS for radical changes to the system hearing complex fraud cases escalated yesterday as Kevin Maxwell walked from the High Court a free man. A judge ruled he will not face a second trial in connection with the £425 million pension-fund scandal that sank his father's media empire nearly five years ago.

The decision, which ends all criminal proceedings in the Maxwell affair, prompted the Serious Fraud Office director, George Staple, to warn



Pandora Maxwell (left) made a remarkable impression on Mr Justice Buckley when she spoke of stress caused by the threat of a second trial.

"Her obvious distress of 'serious implications' for the trial of white-collar crime. There are suggestions from inside the SFO that courts should be given back the power they lost 26 years ago to swear in 'special juries' composed of bank managers,

was, I am convinced, entirely genuine. She described the agony of trial and the days waiting for the verdict with the prospect of a significant prison sentence in the balance. "She told me of problems with her children. In particular, their son, who had been told by schoolmates that his father was going to

prison. Whenever her husband goes out she is asked 'Will daddy be coming home again?' "Mrs Maxwell's bewilderment and anger at the decision to proceed to another trial were not felled. I cannot be over-influenced by such matters, but no one could have been unmoved by her evidence."

sense and humanity". Mr Justice Buckley delivered his decision in a 55-minute statement in Court 13. "These proceedings serve no further public interest and benefit." A second trial "would be unfair, so unfair as

to amount to an abuse of power of the court."

Kevin, his brother Ian, and the financial adviser, Larry Trachtenberg, were cleared in January after a 131-day trial on charges on conspiracy to defraud pension funds. The SFO announced it would proceed with separate charges against Kevin, Mr Trachtenberg and the former Maxwell executive, Albert Fuller, on conspiracy to defraud bankers.

Two more counts involved Kevin, Mr Fuller and Mr turn to page 3, column 3



Star in the east, page 3; Leader comment, page 8; City Notebook, page 11

Inside

Britain Prince Charles has blamed factory farming for Britain's BSE crisis and urged moves towards organic farming. 4

World News Clinton is so far ahead in the race for the White House that the focus has shifted to Democrat hopes of regaining control of Congress. 6

Finance The OFT began a large inquiry into personal pensions, focussing on people hoodwinked into leaving company pension schemes. 11

Sport Crystal Palace's Dave Bassett is the latest manager to turn down the job at Manchester City, throwing Maine Road into turmoil. 16

Comment and Letters 9; Obituaries 10; Friday Review; Quick Crossword 15; TV, Radio and Weather 16



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Sketch

Greens looking fairly faded



Stuart Millar

IT MAY have been a typing error, but insiders prefer to see it as a calculated bid for publicity. To the horror of Green Party officials, the draft agenda for their autumn conference this week bore the dubious invitation: "Female circumcision - bring your own instruments". Whether cock-up or conspiracy, it would undoubtedly have been less cringe-inducing than the reality of the conference yesterday.

Delegates arrived in buoyant mood. Spurred by their campaigning success on the Road Traffic Reduction Bill and a recent increase in membership, the party went into the conference on a good note of optimism and a determination to continue the fight.

Yet you just can't help feeling sorry for the Greens. While their mainstream political rivals spend the annual conference season in the relative luxury of Blackpool, Brighton or Bournemouth, this party's dedicated activists are saddled with a grey and windswept Hastings.

Of course, the Sussex town and the party do have a few things in common - both were thrust unwittingly into the limelight by one-off cataclysmic political events only to fade into decay.

And just as the town's new slogan is "1996 - the year Hastings battled back", the Greens are struggling to recapture their earlier promise.

But no matter how much they want to change the planet, it is difficult to escape the notion that they are not really of it.

Take yesterday's main event for example, billed as an election rally to rouse members. On the platform, decked out in sunflowers, speakers talked loftily about seizing the opportunity to establish a new fault-line in British politics.

while a smattering of delegates sat around little tables, sipping tea from Thermos flasks and clapping politely. As the soft-spoken chairman called delegates up to speak by their first names, observers could have been forgiven for thinking they had strayed into the local Women's Institute party conference at a dining moment in British politics.

And that banner above the platform would have had Maurice Saatchi spinning in his ermine finery - a big, admittedly clever-looking, green and yellow owl bearing the slogan "We have the answers". Looking around the sparsely populated room, one question they couldn't answer was what had happened to all the delegates.

The press blurb promised 500. In the hall there were about 80 and most of them seemed to be from the Oxford branch, which is apparently to the Greens what the Transport and General Workers is to the TUC.

Nor were there very many signs of evidence, such as surefire Green crowd-pullers as the "healing area", identifiable by the perfumed aroma and the table of coloured gemstones. Apart from a couple of people crashed out on tables (recognisable as eco-types by the obligatory ethnic-pattern blankets they dozed under), only the healers themselves were there. Packing their wares, they shrugged and headed off, presumably to the bar for some old-style healing.

The real business of this conference will start today. The Greens are considering making 1996 the year they bottled out. A group, led by the Mancunian activist, Dr Spencer Fitz-Gibbon, has tabled an emergency motion calling for the national party organisation to disengage itself from the general election process.

US general explodes Pentagon's defence against claims of Gulf war syndrome

Nerve gas 'hit 24,000'

Ian Katz in New York

AN AMERICAN general yesterday blew apart the pretence that mystery illnesses known collectively as the "Gulf war syndrome" may have affected only a small number of allied troops who served in the 1990-91 conflict.

General Barry McCaffrey, a senior commander during the war, said he feared as many as 24,000 of his troops may have been exposed to the deadly nerve gas sarin when United States soldiers blew up a massive ammunition depot in southern Iraq shortly after the conflict had ended.

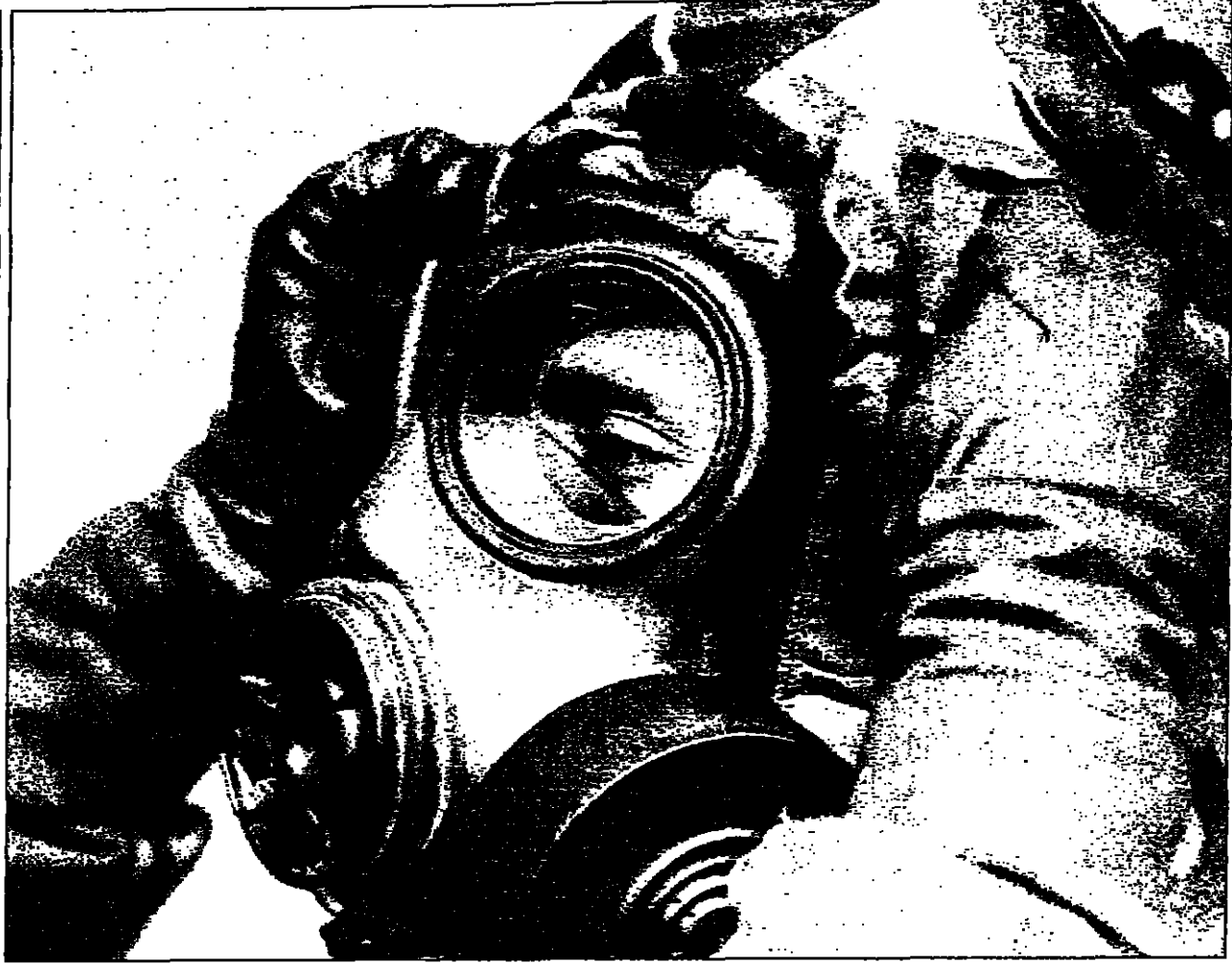
The retired general - who now serves as President Bill Clinton's drug-enforcement supremo - said that on March 4, 1991, his entire division was within 15 miles of an Iraqi bunker used to store chemical weapons when, apparently unknown by him at the time, it was destroyed by US demolition experts.

More than 60,000 US and 1,700 British veterans of the Gulf war have persistently complained of mysterious health problems which they suspect were caused by exposure to non-conventional weapons during the campaign to liberate Kuwait.

Gen McCaffrey expressed his fears as the Pentagon admitted for the first time that more than 5,000 US troops may have been exposed to sarin when the concrete bunker in the sprawling Kamisayah ammunition depot was blown up, sending a dense cloud of smoke drifting across the desert.

The US Defence Department had previously insisted that only about 300 or 400 troops directly involved in the Kamisayah demolition may have been exposed to chemical weapons after the March 4 explosion and the later destruction of a store of Katyusha rockets with chemical warheads on March 10.

The emergence of new details strikes directly at the Pentagon's position. Before it began conceding that some troops may have been affected, it had insisted for more than four years that US troops were not exposed in



The way it was... gas masks in the Gulf attempted to combat ever-present threat of nerve gas attack. PHOTOGRAPH MARTIN ARGILES

large numbers to chemical or biological weapons.

Gen McCaffrey told Newsday that an inspection of maps and records showed that his 24th Mechanised Infantry Division had been within 15 miles of so-called "Bunker 73" when it was blown up. The Pentagon has admitted that troops within a 18-mile radius may have suffered "low-level exposure".

Indicating that no one had informed him of the bunker's destruction, the general said: "I am astounded that I hadn't heard of this report [of the sarin demolition] before. We were scared to death precisely this would happen."

He said his troops had worn rubber suits, gloves and boot

coverings throughout the war to protect against gas attacks - but had not been wearing gas masks when the bunker was demolished.

On Wednesday night the Pentagon said that it was raising its estimate of the number of troops who may have been affected because its investigators had discovered that chemical agents may have been released on two separate occasions, and not just one.

"As we learn more about Kamisayah in the next few weeks we expect to identify more troops who might have been exposed," the Pentagon said in a statement. The US military has said that it is notifying all veterans who may have been ex-

posed, but is now certain to come under intense pressure to provide details on precisely which units were in the area.

Earlier this month, a White House inquiry into Gulf war syndrome criticised the Pentagon for conducting a "superficial" investigation and warned that officials had dramatically underestimated the number of troops who may have been exposed.

David Fairhall writes: A Ministry of Defence spokesman in London said yesterday: "No British forces were in the vicinity of Bunker 73. The nearest British troops were 150 kilometres south-east of Kamisayah, concentrated west of Kuwait City." But the US reports will nev-

ertheless provide ammunition for British veterans meeting in Southport this weekend who are appealing for more information about ex-service personnel suffering from Gulf war syndrome.

"We're not surprised to hear of this," Tony Flint, regional co-ordinator of the National Gulf Veterans and Families Association, said last night. "Obviously we must now investigate whether any British troops were in the same area."

The association has set up a helpline (0161 929 4748) for those seeking advice.

Cabinet stalls on beef decision

A SPECIAL Cabinet meeting on BSE and the beef recall ended after two hours last night with no decision on limiting meat imports to the UK, despite earlier indications that Britain was ready to snub its European partners and unilaterally cut back on the cattle to be killed.

A Downing Street spokesman said there would be "no statement at this stage". There is expected to be clarification this morning.

The Prime Minister chaired the talks, called to discuss the way ahead for BSE curbs in Britain. Ministers, including the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Kenneth Clarke, and the Agriculture Minister, Douglas Hogg, are thought to have considered a proposal on means of limiting imports.

The EU Commission offered a ray of hope on Wednesday night by agreeing to look at the British research which suggests mass slaughter is unnecessary.

Both Tory backbenchers and some Cabinet members are gloomy about the prospects of either the European Commission or other EU member states softening their stance on British beef. It means some kind of backdash against imported beef would be likely to strike a chord among disgruntled Conservatives.

A European Commission spokesman confirmed yesterday that it would be examining the new scientific evidence from Britain, but said it was unlikely that the export ban could be lifted within months.

Earlier, a cross-party group of Northern Ireland politicians met Mr Major at Downing Street to emphasise to him that the BSE crisis is having a serious effect on the Ulster economy, and call for action. They left with no assurance that farmers in Northern Ireland would be treated differently.

In Strasbourg MEPs - John Hume, the SDLP leader, and the Ulster Unionist Jim Nicholson - were jointly pressing the case at a meeting with the EU Agriculture Commissioner.

Review

Cold witness of human bondage

Adrian Searle

Robert Mapplethorpe
Hayward Gallery, London

ROBERT Mapplethorpe always was a bad boy. The latest exhibition of his work, which opens to the public today, arrives in London in a predictable fanfare of indignation. True to form for the American photographer, who died of Aids in 1989, it runs the gamut from willies to lilies, from portraiture to pornography.

It includes pictures of children - though not the one of Rosie, a young girl with no knickers, at the centre of the recent row over allegedly pornographic imagery. The picture was among some 40 left out because there wasn't enough room for the whole of the huge touring show at the Hayward. The organisers admit to having taken legal advice, but also argue that Rosie is not a key work.

The 200-odd works that are exhibited make it clear that whether Mapplethorpe is photographing a flower in a vase, a battleship on a grey horizon, an erect penis or a society beauty, the same erotic charge is present. This is why his work seems so dangerous. He was, in many respects, a very conventional photographer, with his coldly glamorous portraits of Donald Sutherland and Doris Saatchi, the painter Willem De Kooning and the actress Susan Sarandon, his sometimes touching, almost sentimental, pictures of children, and his elegantly staged still lives of flowers.

Part of the shock, however, is that these ordinary subjects

are captured with the same sexual and aesthetic charge as his pictures of revolvers and sadomasochistic practices. Aesthetic taste always has an erotic component, and Mapplethorpe's skill was to condense and reveal it. Everything, for him, was strange, and everything he photographed was caught in a haunting chiaroscuro.

His pictures of men in bondage gear, lounging incongruously in an elegant flat, or of a man with a huge weight suspended from his testicles, are unsettling. One must ask, too, about the way he depicted black men. As much as the camera seems to subjugate them, to turn them into objects, they assert their independence, stare back at us, refuse our gaze. These pictures are full of ambivalence.

Mapplethorpe once said he was merely a commentator on the madness of our times, but it was a madness which affected his own life. Mapplethorpe, with his steely eye, highly formalised photographs of extremes - or downright dangerous - sexual acts, his lingering shots of the body, was too fascinated by his subjects to be seen as merely a witness. "I am looking for perfection in form. I do that with portraits. I do it with cocks. I do it with flowers," he once said. For him, there was perfection even in perversity.

Perhaps we should see him as a symptom as much as a commentator. He throws our liberality into confusion, and our sympathy and desires into doubt. If his work doesn't provoke strong feelings, there's something wrong.

This review appeared in later editions yesterday.

MEPs want curbs on 'cheap' television

Andrew Cuff
Media Correspondent

LEGISLATION to protect public service broadcasters including the BBC was demanded yesterday by the European Parliament.

MEPs voted in Strasbourg for laws to stop satellite and cable companies from having exclusive access to sports

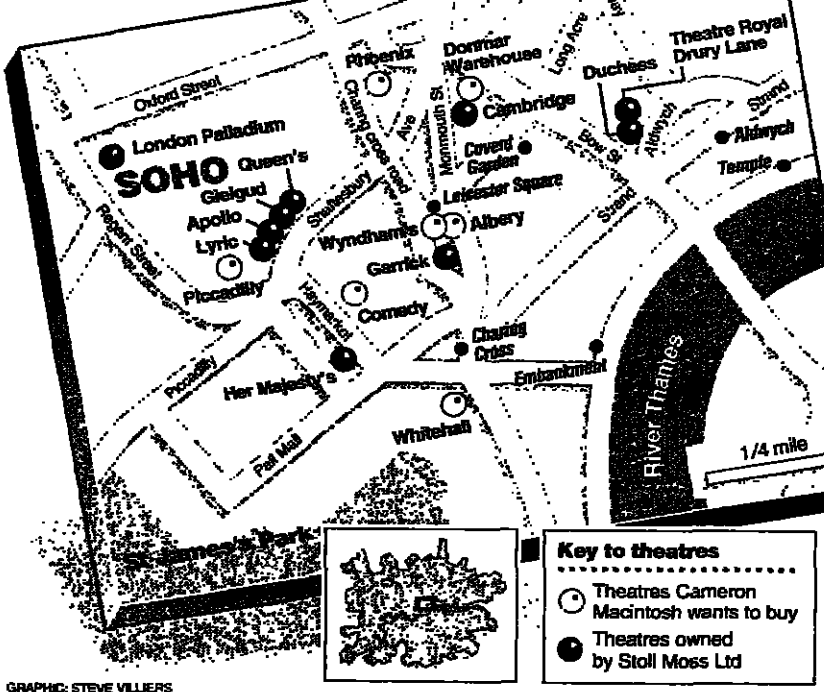
events and to stem the tide of cheap US imports on European television screens.

They said public service broadcasters should continue to receive realistic state funding and play an integral part in the development of digital television.

A report drawn up by Carole Tongue, the Labour MEP for London East, was adopted by 213 votes to 140.

That's showbiz!

Cameron Mackintosh owns the Prince of Wales and Prince Edward theatres. He intends to buy seven more West End theatres now owned by Mayfair Theatres and Cinemas Ltd.



Producer set for West End coup

Mackintosh plan to buy seven theatres wins an ovation

Sarah Boseley

CAMERON Mackintosh, the multi-millionaire producer of many of Britain's most successful musicals, from Cats to Les Misérables and Miss Saigon, looks set to buy seven West End theatres and become the most influential figure in London's theatre world.

Mackintosh, already the owner of the Prince of Wales and the Prince Edward theatres, is thought to be in the final stages of negotiations with Mayfair Theatres and Cinemas, owners of the Albery, Piccadilly Donmar Warehouse, Whitehall, Wyndhams, Comedy and Phoenix theatres. The deal would be worth many millions. The Playhouse, a small London theatre, was on the market recently for £2 million.

It is largely thanks to Mackintosh that musicals have swept the West End -



Cameron Mackintosh: in final negotiations

there are 18 now playing - a development that has dismayed those who mourn the disappearing serious drama. And yet the theatrical world was yesterday delighted at the prospect of Mackintosh taking control of such a slice of the West End.

"One of the crucial points is that for a long time a number of us have felt that one of the main problems in the West End is that theatres are not owned, as they are in the United States, by people who put

on plays," said the theatre critic, Sheridan Morley, who says he expects an announcement of the deal this weekend.

"These buildings are now a hundred years old and need a lot of work. An absentee landlord is less likely to do it."

Andrew Lloyd-Webber had refurbished the Adelphi, where his hit Sunset Boulevard is playing, and the Palace Theatre, where Mackintosh's Les Misérables was still running. Mackintosh had done "a raft of stunning propositions" on the Prince Edward, where his new musical, Martin Guerre, opened in July, said Mr Morley.

If Mackintosh did the same on his new clutch of theatres, "they will suddenly have warmth and heart". Mackintosh, who commands extraordinary devotion from colleagues, would certainly want his theatres to look smart and attractive, both as a matter of pride and to attract audiences who may be deterred by their current shabbiness.

Producers, managers and critics alike robustly refute any suggestion that the new Mackintosh venues

would hold yet more all-singing, all-dancing shows. For a start, they argue, most of them are too small for musicals.

"They are all basically straight play theatres," said Michael Billington, the Guardian's theatre critic. "They are the heart at the moment of drama in the West End - the Albery has Chekhov, the Wyndhams has a new play. I would hope and assume that if Cameron Mackintosh does take them over, he will pursue that policy. He is a very shrewd and sensible theatrical operator. He is a musical specialist, but he does know about straight plays and I assume he would approach them as straight play venues."

Howard Watson, of the Society of London Theatres, said: "His support of theatre as an individual rather than as a producer of a company goes right across the board. He does a lot of charity work for theatres. He helped get the Old Fire Station in Oxford up and running."

With nine theatres, Mackintosh would have the second biggest collection in London, beaten by Stoll Moss Holdings, which has ten.

ARE SOME DRUG COMPANIES TOO BUSY LINING THEIR POCKETS TO WORRY ABOUT THE LINING OF YOUR STOMACH? Non-steroidal anti-inflammatories are responsible for over 2000 deaths a year. Some are freely available over the counter. Read the facts about them only in this week's Radio Times. RadioTimes IT'S NOT WHAT YOU EXPECT.

The Guardian Saga of the rising sons

Ian and Kevin follow well-trodden path into Russia

Max

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Science breakthrough in zero-smart

مكزامن التحصيل

Saga of the rising sons

Ian and Kevin follow well-trodden path into Russia



Kevin Maxwell and Pandora, the wife who stood by him throughout the trial and since, outside their home at Mallsford Manor

PHOTOGRAPH GARY CALTON

Maxwells' star shines in the East

Lisa Buckingham, Colin Weston, David Gow and Richard Norton-Taylor

LIKE pees out of a tarnished pod. Kevin and Ian Maxwell have turned their business skills towards publishing, television and Russia. Their father, the discredited media tycoon, Robert Maxwell, was born in Czechoslovakia and always maintained strong links with eastern Europe even when that meant endorsing some of the region's most vilified regimes. He spoke six east European languages, and claimed to be a trusted associate of the former Soviet chief, Mikhail Gorbachev.

Now two of his sons, who were routinely humiliated by their father when they worked as hired hands in his media empire, are ploughing the same furrow. They are working in what is described as a freelance capacity for Westbourne Communications, a central London consultancy run by Jean Baddeley — Robert Maxwell's long-standing secretary — which has a number of projects in the former Soviet Union. It is said to pay them up to £30,000 a year each — almost certainly a gross under-estimate. Chief among Westbourne's projects is a plan to set up a satellite TV operation for 150

million viewers in partnership with the state-controlled All-Russian Television and Radio. But the junior Maxwells have already been involved with Maximov Publications in producing a Who's Who of top Russians retailing at £100.

Ian is listed as an editorial director and is a constant visitor to its Moscow offices.

At one time they were working with Nordex, a mysterious Vienna-based trading company, many of whose employees are former Soviet intelligence officers.

Their involvement with Nordex was arranged through Westbourne, Nordex, which trades in the Middle East as well as countries of the former Soviet block, was reported three years ago to have a turnover of £1.7 billion.

Its activities have caught the attention of western intelligence agencies.

Mrs Baddeley said yesterday that Westbourne's relationship with Nordex came to "a natural end" in 1994. "The Maxwell brothers work on various major projects we have, including quite a few in Russia, as strategic business consultants and giving marketing advice."

A business associate commented: "There is no doubt that Kevin and Ian have first-class connections in Moscow. They are plugged into all the right people."

A father of six, Kevin was spectacularly declared bankrupt with record debts of £406.5 million but has been working long hours — in addition to the time he has spent on his defence — on his freelance work.



Kevin Maxwell: working as consultant for ex-secretary



Ghislaine Maxwell... only sibling still untarnished

rupt with record debts of £406.5 million but has been working long hours — in addition to the time he has spent on his defence — on his freelance work. Always portrayed as the brightest of the Maxwell offspring, Kevin was ultimately unable to withstand the sheer force of his father.

But when the sky fell in on the empire after Maxwell disappeared from his yacht, it was the apparently iron-spined women of the family who caught the imagination as the backbone of the family.

Cap'n Bob's wife, Elizabeth, was, however, soon to reveal what hell the media tycoon had put her through and the apparently made-in-heaven match between the second oldest son, Ian, and his wife Laura was to fall apart.

Laura stood by Ian's side for the entire 131-day trial, and had remained steadfast despite the prospect of homelessness. But the blonde Chicago-born former model who had taken up a career in TV, finally quit her husband's side after five years of marriage.

Only Pandora, Kevin's

earthly spoken other half — famed for telling a dawn raid of police and fraud investigators to "piss off" — has remained on side, even bearing another child.

Pandora, the daughter of a car number plate maker, never saw eye-to-eye with Kevin's father — an animosity which was, by all accounts, wholly reciprocated — although she claimed to have been "charmed" by the charismatic tycoon as much as most others.

Neither Kevin nor Ian was immune to this paternal seduction, even though clearly intimidated by their father who felt no compunction in publicly humiliating both.

Apart from the oldest surviving child, Phillip, who long since distanced himself from his father's business, and Isabel, only Ghislaine, the 34-year-old younger daughter — regarded as the apple of Daddy's eye — appears untarnished by the brush of the scandal.

A persistent subject of tabloid speculation about her lifestyle and romantic attachments, she appears to have maintained her spending and

Facts and figures of the affair

The Maxwell affair began 1,752 days ago, when Kevin told a press conference in December 1991 that he "couldn't say" whether the group's pension funds remained in surplus.

Inquiries established a £225 million shortfall on Maxwell pension schemes: 32,000 pensioners were affected, although all have now been compensated.

Bringing the Maxwell brothers to trial cost at least £25 million.

The Maxwell allegations

rank as Britain's largest domestic fraud case.

Jurors in the 131-day trial of Kevin and Ian Maxwell and the financial adviser, Larry Trachtenberg, made history in January with the longest retirement of any jury — 11 nights.

Kevin was in the witness box for 21 days; his brother, Ian, did not give evidence.

Nobody has been convicted of a criminal offence in relation to the affair, nor is any senior banker known to have resigned.

Decision will bring calls for jury reform

Clare Dyer Legal Correspondent

THE final collapse of the Maxwell prosecutions will inevitably prompt calls for radical reform of juries in complex fraud trials.

The Serious Fraud Office fears yesterday's decision could undermine its whole approach to the most complex cases — splitting them into a series of trials to make them manageable for juries. Prosecutors fear the message of yesterday's ruling — that if the first trial fails they may not get a second chance — will make it hard to convey a whole picture of dishonesty to a randomly chosen jury.

The SFO believes there is no chance that Parliament would accept the 1986 recommendations of the Roskill Committee on Fraud Trials, that such cases be dealt with by a judge with two specially qualified assessors. But the office may lobby the Home Office and Lord Chancellor's department for a revival of the special seven-member juries which sat at the Old Bailey until just after the second world war, to deal with serious frauds. The SFO may press for a minimum educa-

tional requirement, such as GCSEs in English and maths.

The office may also float a proposal that those selected to sit on a jury for months should be paid, and their employers compensated for their absence, to discourage better-qualified people from opting out of jury service.

They will argue that juries comprising such people could cope with weighing up the evidence in even the longest, most complex cases — removing the need to break them up into several trials.

Any move to tamper with the jury system will meet strong opposition from the senior judiciary, the Bar and the Law Society. Pressure for research into how juries reach their verdicts is mounting from senior lawyers and academics though not, on the whole, from judges, who fear too close a scrutiny of the jury could be the first step to its demise. The Contempt of Court Act bars all research into jury deliberations.

James Morton, editor of the New Law Journal and joint author of a book on juries, said: "The first thing that must be done is to repeal the ban in the Contempt of Court Act so we can have proper research on juries."

After the Maxwell defendants' acquittal last January, the Attorney-General, Sir Nicholas Lyell, conceded that the Government would need to look "carefully" at the possibility of dispensing with juries in fraud trials.

ADVERTISEMENT

Scientists claim breakthrough in zero-gravity sminting

By IAN MODAIRE



Russian volunteers

the humming birds could achieve a state of complete weightlessness. In other words, they could float. Even more sensational, this experiment has now been carried out on humans; some as heavy as 20 stone.

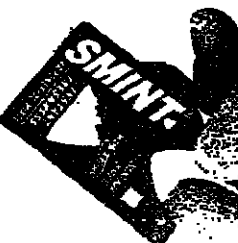
Leaked photographs taken "somewhere in England" show Russian volunteers floating at least 15 feet in the air and being secured by fishing lines. Professor Hart explains: "At first, it was a bit tricky with the humans, especially the overweight Russian volunteers. We had to subject them to continuous sminting before we saw any effect."

But once we got the dose right, we had them floating on air for up to an hour at a time.

PHYSICISTS in Cambridge are close to solving the bizarre and baffling phenomenon of zero gravity sminting. A team led by Professor Albert E. Hart, has been operating with scientists from both the USA and Russia to determine the effects of zero gravity sminting on humming birds.

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Who did steal the £400m?

continued from page 1

Trachtenberg on related charges. The former Maxwell executive, Michael Stoney, would have faced two accusations of false accounting. None of these charges will now be prosecuted. The SFO claimed yesterday's ruling had put it in an impossible position. Already the judiciary has ruled that jurors should not have to sit through lengthy trials relating to large numbers of offences, so the SFO has responded, as "severing" the indictment into separate cases.

Now, Mr Justice Buckley has ruled that it ought in future to be "unusual" for there to be a second trial in such cases.

Mr Staple said: "This case vividly illustrates the difficulties of large fraud cases." In June, the director suggested the time may have come to examine the possibility of taking juries out of lengthy fraud trials and replacing them with panels of judges, "expert assessors" or a mixture of the two.

But a school of thought inside the agency suggests "special juries", abolished in 1970, may provide a compromise acceptable to whoever forms the next Government. The SFO believed it had a right to verdicts on the whole



Kevin (right) and Ian Maxwell celebrate after the decision

of its Maxwell indictment, the judge disagreed. He said that where there was an "affront to fair play and decency... the administration of justice is better served by staying the proceedings."

He attacked the "unhealthy and adverse media publicity" surrounding the Maxwell affair and said another trial would signal to the public that the authorities did not accept the verdict of the first jury. "I accept the jury's verdict. These proceedings are stayed."

There were extraordinary scenes outside the High Court as Kevin emerged with his arm around his brother, Ian. Police battled with reporters to clear a path to a waiting Alfa Romeo saloon. Shortly afterwards, Kevin faced the media in the Great Hall of Lincoln's Inn and spoke of a "sense of relief that a nightmare is over". He thanked his wife, family

and friends and responded to criticisms of his multi-million pound legal-aid bill. "Justice... and my freedom [don't] have a price."

"This is... a great day for me personally." His next move would be "lunch, hopefully". He was "still pretty numb from this morning's decision. It hasn't sunk in."

As the Maxwells celebrated, the SFO was once again the target for criticism. Labour's economic spokesman, Mike O'Brien, confirmed that the role of the anti-fraud force would come within the regulatory review promised should the party form the next government. "Some of the decisions taken by the SFO and the way in which they have been implemented have raised concerns for some years."

The Liberal Democrats suggested the office's twin investigation-prosecution function ought to be separated.



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RadioTimes

4 BRITAIN

Kurdish TV still on air after raids

Ian Black
Diplomatic Editor

STAFF at the world's only Kurdish television station vowed to continue broadcasting from their London headquarters yesterday after normal service was interrupted by a police raid for material linking it to terrorism. Hikmet Tabuk, director of Med-TV, last night used an emergency satellite link to tell the station's audience in Europe and south-eastern Turkey that simultaneous searches had also been mounted on Wednesday at the company offices in Belgium and homes in Germany. Subscribers saw only a message on TV screens announcing: "We have been attacked by the enemy. We hope to continue broadcasting soon."

Raids were also reported on the Kurdistan parliament in exile in Brussels and Kurdish premises in France. Computer disks and files were seized from the channel's central London office during a three-hour visit by Special Branch officers using a warrant issued under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, staff said. No one has been charged but Scotland Yard said last

night that investigations were continuing.

"The Turks give information about us, but the question is whether it is accurate or not," Mr Tabuk said. "We are confident that we have nothing to hide."

"This raid on a minority language broadcaster shows the enormous pressures deployed against any expression of Kurdish cultural identity," Mr Tabuk said that quick Turkish media coverage of the raids — the main story in yesterday's newspapers — suggested Ankara had prior knowledge.

Turkish TV reported last night that 80 Med-TV studio staff and other Kurdish activists in Brussels were still in custody after police searched 20 houses following the seizure in Luxembourg of 350 million francs (£45 million) belonging to the company.

Turkey, a member of Nato and a candidate for the European Union, has made the closure of the channel, on air for 17 months, a high priority in its foreign relations. Turkey claims Med-TV is the propaganda arm of the separatist Kurdish Workers' Party, which has been fighting a bloody 11-year war in the south-east of the country. Med-TV says it is simply a voice for the Kurds, the world's largest stateless nation.



Details of Van Gogh's Farm near Auvers, moving from the Tate to the National Gallery, and (below) Picasso's Fruit Dish, Bottle and Violin, which is going in the opposite direction

Modern art on move in galleries reshuffle

Maev Kennedy on a matter of definition

MODERN ART began in 1900, it has been officially decided, and as a result Picasso, Monet, and Gauguin will have to move home.

The directors of the two great British art collections, the National Gallery and the Tate, are to exchange dozens of paintings in a move to rationalise their displays.

The Tate will now declare 1900 as the starting date for its modern foreign collection — the British collection will still begin with works dating from the 17th century. The Tate will lend some paintings predating 1900 to fill gaps in the display of the National Gallery, receiving in return masterpieces including Monet's magnificent late Water Lilies.

"We think it is very important that the collections should be where they make the most sense, and where the public can most enjoy them," said Neil MacGregor, director of the National Gallery.

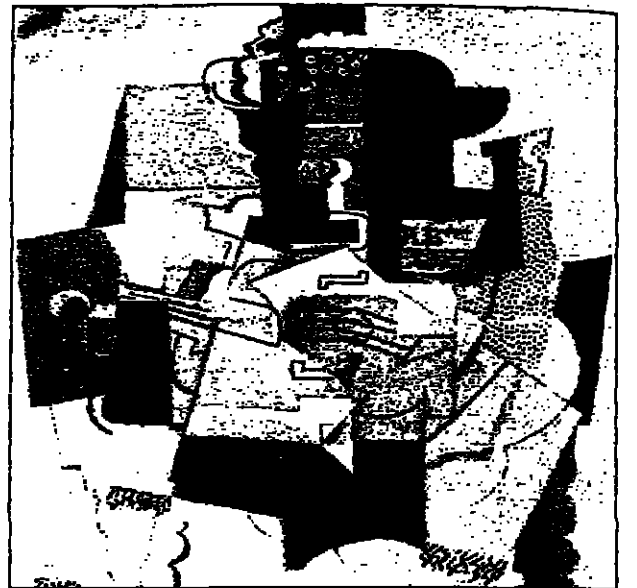
In the past, it took a lot of homework for visitors to follow the careers of major artists like Matisse or Picasso, and realise that 10-year gaps in their development in one collection were filled by paintings in the other.

The Tate had nothing by the influential Gustav Klimt, but will now receive a wonderful society portrait of 1904. The National also had some odd holes. Gauguin, renowned for the blazing colour of his Tahitian paintings, had up until now been represented by a

single sober early vase of flowers, but the gallery will soon house a classic late work, Faa Theihe, painted in 1898, and described by Mr MacGregor as "a virtual resume of his achievements in Tahiti".

He said the date 1900 — already attacked by some critics as too late for the Impressionists and too early for Abstract — was chosen as being simple and logical, and also making the most sense for the pictures in the collections.

A bit of legwork will still be needed to follow the careers of artists like Monet, who bridged the 19th and 20th centuries. Their work will still be split, and Monet's works will travel in both directions as part of the loan arrangement.



New gain for women priests

Madeleine Bunting
Religious Affairs Editor

THE Church in Wales voted by the narrowest of margins yesterday to lift the ban on women becoming priests.

The change scraped through by one vote among the clergy — though bishops and laity voted heavily in favour — ending the last bar on women in the priesthood within the Anglican church in Britain.

The decision, at a tense meeting in Lampeter, comes nearly three years after the Church of England dropped its ban, and also brings the Welsh Anglicans in line with the Church in Scotland and Ireland.

Most of the 70 women deacons in the Church will now be looking forward to a mass ordination celebration early next year. Two years ago their hopes were dashed when the same bill was defeated by conservative clergy.

All six bishops in the Church — which has just over 90,000 adherents in Wales — voted for women becoming priests after the Archbishop of Wales made a passionate appeal to the

conference not to allow the Church to become isolated.

"We will simply slide backwards and nobody will be prepared to listen to us. We will just be a forgotten province of the Anglican Church," said the Rt Rev Alwyn Rice-Jones.

Women clergy had warned that the Church would lose candidates to England if the vote failed again.

The Rev Valerie Jones, who is in charge of three parishes near Llangollen, Clwyd, was among those celebrating. "I don't know what would have happened if the vote had been lost again. There has been a great sense of frustration and work left undone since we saw women priests allowed in England and elsewhere."

The laity voted heavily in favour by 138 votes to 47. The real opposition was in the clergy section which only just managed the required two-thirds majority of 85 in favour and 40 against.

Some clergy may now consider leaving the Church. The bill includes compensation arrangements for those among the 800-odd priests who decide to quit, amounting to two years' full pay — £26,000 — but only if they can prove hardship and resign within a year.

Students face £1,000 fees

Donald Macleod
Education Correspondent

SEVERAL universities will be charging students £1,000 top-up fees next year to meet a shortfall in government funding, the leader of Britain's vice-chancellors said yesterday.

Gareth Roberts, chairman of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (CVCP), said the six universities expected to charge students could be followed in 1998 by about 20 more. His prediction — which provoked a furious response from student leaders — is the clearest indication of a funding crisis in universities following 5 per cent cuts to the sector in last year's Budget. More Treasury cuts are planned, including a 50 per cent reduction in capital funding over three years.

Prof Roberts said he feared that top-up fees would lead to the re-emergence of the old rift between universities and polytechnics. Several of the most popular universities would be in a strong position to charge fees without denting recruitment.

He said about six universities would charge fees of £1,000 next year. The London School of Economics is undertaking a feasibility study on fees, while Birmingham and Huddersfield universities have been discussing their introduction. Last year's budget settlement provoked the CVCP into threatening a £300 levy on new students — which prompted Gillian Shephard, the Education and Employment Secretary, to set up an inquiry by Sir Ron Dearing into higher education funding.

Although the vice-chancellors expect him to recommend fees, in the meantime

short-term funding problems are growing. Another bad budget settlement would lead to more redundancies among lecturers, Prof Roberts said. There have already been 2,000 posts cut this year.

At their annual conference in Sheffield, the vice-chancellors dropped proposals for students to repay £20,000 towards the cost of their degrees which they had planned to submit to Sir Ron's inquiry.

Douglas Trainer, president of the NUS, welcomed the vice-chancellors' decision to shelve their plan for £20,000 student loans — but pledged opposition to top-up fees. Individual vice-chancellors would be targeted in any university that tried to introduce fees. Parents and students would be warned in a move to embarrass "rogue institutions", while the union would also consider legal action, he said.

'Four-year' legal aid bills

Clare Dyer
Legal Correspondent

ATYPICAL litigant on legal aid who loses a court case will take four years to pay off the costs under plans to change the legal aid system, solicitors were told yesterday.

Gary Streeter, junior minister in the Lord Chancellor's Department, told lawyers campaigning against the changes that in an average case it would take a year if the litigant won or four years if he lost.

Mr Streeter said the minimum contribution everyone would have to pay to get aid for a court case would be very low. Solicitors, who have mounted a joint campaign against the plans with nine advice organisations, were in no mood to be placated.

Tony Girling, the Law Society president, said the requirement of a one-off fee would place justice beyond the reach of the very poor. The proposal to make losing litigants on legal aid liable for their opponents' costs "will deter decent, hard-working people from bringing genuine cases for fear of being ruined if they lost."

Mr Streeter said legal aid had lost the confidence of the public, who perceived it as top-sided and wasteful. "At present most people who get legal aid face little or no risk of having to pay anything towards the cost. "With noth-

ing to lose, it is not surprising that some people try their luck with weak or trivial cases that no one would dream of paying for themselves. Worse still, opponents, knowing they cannot recover their costs, often concede good cases."

Mr Girling, who outlined Law Society proposals to save £125 million, said: "Let us sweep away the abuses by all means. But in the process let us not sweep away the Child Bs... the victims of asbestos, the tenants living in unfit properties, the hundreds and thousands of ordinary people who have been helped to justice where there would have been none."

Marlene Winfield of the National Consumer Council, said: "We will make even the poorest pay something towards their legal aid. The main effect will be to deter legitimate cases from being brought."

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To many in the brutish, swaggering world of gangsta rap, and even to those who followed his exploits from afar, the biggest surprise was that he lived so long. Ian Katz on the life and death of Tupac Amaru Shakur

Friday Review front

You can't always look the other way

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The Guardian

PM's 'big idea' turns five

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PM's 'big idea' turns five

Rebecca Smithers
Political Correspondent

AMBULANCE services in England and Wales will start to prioritise emergency calls from next year, with crews required to respond to the most urgent ones within eight minutes.

At present they have to respond to emergencies within 14 minutes in major cities and 19 minutes elsewhere — but from April emergency calls will be screened for "life-threatening conditions", the Government announced in a white paper published yesterday to mark five years of the Citizen's Charter.

The ambulance initiative will be launched in four areas before being introduced in other parts of the country.

The white paper also sets new targets requiring government departments to deal with letters from the public



John Major and public services minister Roger Freeman watch Moseley School, Birmingham pupils compile Charter Mark league tables. PHOTOGRAPH: MICHAEL STEWENS

within 20 working days — one of 100 new commitments to improve health, education, transport and public services. But it also reveals a slump in the quality of some services in the last five years. The number of patients not admitted to hospital within a

month of their first cancelled operation has gone up in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. On the Tube, London Underground — which five years ago met all nine service regularity targets — now meets only four out of 10 targets set.

Launching the white paper, John Major said: "At the heart of the Citizen's Charter is one simple thought: service users should come first. We all use public services ... they should be run for our benefit and meet our needs." Public services minister

Roger Freeman said the success of the Citizen's Charter was reflected in the fact that there are 42 national charters and 10,000 local schemes.

But Derek Foster, shadow Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, said Mr Major's "big idea" of charters had

been "a national joke", adding: "This anniversary presented the Government with a unique opportunity to transform the programme into a real force for change. They have failed abysmally. The white paper is just more of the same old hype."

Tory deal on currency ruled out

Michael White
Political Editor

SENIOR Conservatives last night dismissed hopes of agreeing a compromise in the feud over the single European currency, whereby the Cabinet would rule out membership in the first 1996 wave but allow the possibility of joining at some time in the next parliament.

As the former prime minister, Sir Edward Heath, last night weighed in on the pro-single currency side of the argument, some Tory sceptics endorsed such a compromise as a discreet attempt to split the difference between the two factions.

With six ex-cabinet grandees, including Sir Edward, signing a letter yesterday attacking the "Little England" rightwing, the current Cabinet's most outspoken European, Kenneth Clarke, said it would be "folly" to change policies now.

That amounts to keeping all options open during the coming election, Mr Clarke confirms today in an interview with the Daily Telegraph. The Chancellor predicts that, despite pressure for change, John Major's so-called Maastricht opt-out will hold right up to election day.

To the fury of the Tory right, who dubbed the six "Old Men Behaving Badly", another grandee, Douglas Hurd, yesterday made plain that Tories of the centre-left are "no longer going to shut up for fear of being told we are rocking the boat". They will fight to protect the existing formula from further salami-tactics by the right.

Yesterday the row dominated a planned attack by the Tory chairman, Brian Ma-

whinney, on the "extremist" Liberal Democrats. "The whole of the Conservative Party is united in not wishing to be part of a federal Europe," said Dr Mawhinney. Unlike Mr Clarke, he refused to rule out explicitly a pre-election change in the Government's neither in nor out, wait-and-see stance on the currency. But he insisted at a Central Office news conference: "The position of the Government is absolutely clear. It is set out for all to see."

Since Lady Thatcher, John Redwood, and (privately) some ministers want Mr Major to state that Britain will not join the currency in the 1997-2002 parliament, the idea of splitting the difference has superficial appeal.

It would mean saying a Major cabinet would stay out of the "first wave" planned by France and Germany for 1999, while keeping open the chance to join before 2002. But Major loyalists argue that it would resolve none of the hard choices and merely strengthen the Euro-sceptic wing.

In a speech last night, Sir Edward, who took Britain into Europe in 1973, argued that European matters should be debated in international terms, not used as a domestic football. He was critical of the midweek warning by the Foreign Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, that a rush to a single currency could deeply divide Europe. Mr Redwood welcomed the speech, and challenged Europe to tackle the real crisis — "mass unemployment".

Motions for next month's Tory conference to support a referendum on the issue, to Dr Mawhinney's relief.

Alex Carille, page 9

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Cook praises 'thoughtful and energetic' Labour leader

Ewen MacAskill, Chief
Political Correspondent

TONY Blair received fulsome praise last night from Robin Cook, one of the leading left-wingers in the shadow cabinet.

Mr Cook described Mr Blair as a "leader who is both energetic and thoughtful. He understands and shares the everyday concerns of a modern young family. He also offers a vision for the future of our nation".

Party strategists agreed at the weekend that senior shadow cabinet members would speak up for Mr Blair to counter weeks of internal wrangling. Although Mr Cook has been in a bitter feud with the shadow chancellor, Gordon Brown, he has for the most part supported Mr Blair.

Mr Cook, speaking to the Yorkshire Fiscal Group in Leeds, said Labour had moved forward on the basis of values "which are eternal but which must be applied in new ways to changing circumstances. We believe the individual thrives best in a strong community bound by common goals and common rules".

He added: "We believe we have a duty, as individuals and as a society, to help the weak and the poor and the sick." He admitted to at least one occasion on which he had disagreed with Mr Blair over the rewriting of Clause 4.

"It is no secret that I was sceptical about the need to change Clause 4 or our constitution. Yet the debate strengthened our party and we now have a statement of aims and values which says what the Tory lie machine cannot easily misrepresent," Mr Cook said.

Mawhinney makes play for 'soft' Lib Dem support

Michael White

THE Liberal Democrats were last night fighting off a Conservative drive to paint Paddy Ashdown's party as a "radical leftwing" organisation whose increasingly extreme policies have confused voters.

Armed with an opinion poll, Brian Mawhinney, the Tory party chairman, denounced the Lib Dems as not so much "woolly" as dangerous. He said Lib Dem supporters would "come home to the Conservatives" when they understood its policies.

Tory officials last night brandished an internal memo from the Conservative Research Department (CRD) which claimed that Mr Ashdown's leftward drift — including his abandonment of so-called "equidistance" between his larger rivals — had made the Lib Dems vulnerable.

They could be "an important source of new votes at the next election", predicted Danny Finkelstein, CRD director. He cited Lib Dem support for a United States of Europe as a potent target.

Support for "single policies" like the legalisation of cannabis — not Lib Dem policy — will also be exploited, as will apparent voter confusion over the party's famous "1p on income tax" pledge to help education. Many voters think it means literally 1p — not 1p in the pound, Tories claim.

The findings of the ICM poll suggested that only one in five of those who say they will vote for the Lib Dems can be counted as firm supporters. But the Liberal Democrat MP Alex Carille said the MP fact that the Tories had commissioned the poll showed they were "running scared".

Devolution vote defended

DOUG Henderson, Labour's spokesman on constitutional issues, will defend the party's decision to seek endorsement of a Scottish parliament through a referendum in a Guardian Charter 88 debate in Edinburgh tonight.

Liberal Democrats, who have threatened to vote against a referendum bill. The main speaker will be joined by Phil Giallie, Tory MP for Ayr, and the SNP's Fiona Hyslop for a panel discussion. Admission to the debate, which begins at 7.30pm in Edinburgh City Chambers, costs £5 (£3 concessions).

He will be opposed by Jim Wallace, leader of the Scottish

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Above, one of Sheriff Arpaio's chain gang "volunteers". Above right, the women leave the prison, shackled together and stirred by the words of their marching song, right, composed by the gang's unofficial leader

We go to work so we don't get fat, Wear orange suits and orange hats,

Big wide belts and shiny boots, People say that we look cute.

Women put to work in US chain gang

Chris Reed in Phoenix, Arizona

AMERICA'S latest innovation in penal servitude clanked out of a Phoenix jail at dawn yesterday: 15 women shackled together in the country's first female chain gang. "It's equal opportunity incarceration," declared Sheriff Joe Arpaio, who proudly calls himself America's toughest law officer. As civil rights activists held a demonstration nearby, he barked: "Forget all that stuff about rehabilitation. I'm not an educator, I'm not a social worker, I'm a cop. The women weed and pick up rubbish in the city streets. They work eight hours a day, seven days a week for 30 days to win release from 'lock down', where four inmates share an 8ft by 10ft cell. The women seem reconciled, almost cheerful. Several

had bought new lipstick for the television cameras. They emerged chanting a marching song that was more ironic than mournful: *We go to work so we don't get fat. Wear orange suits and orange hats. Big wide belts and shiny boots. People say that we look cute.* The composer and unofficial leader of the gang, Princess Richardson, aged 42, said: "I don't know whether it's inhumane. We knew about this when we got jail — everyone knows about Sheriff Joe. They have to keep us in chains for security, and I accept that." Richardson, like the others, is serving a maximum of one year, and was originally sentenced for shooting at her abusive husband (she missed), then for violating parole. Unrepentant, she vows: "I'll get him next time." The women's crimes range

from drug offences and prostitution to armed robbery. Dana Stanley, aged 28, a prostitute, was the only one to condemn the chain as the women spoke freely to journalists while Mr Arpaio looked on. "Putting women on a chain gang is wrong. I'm only doing it so I can get back into the main jail. I was put in lock down just for talking to

the men, which is prohibited, but then I don't think prostitution should be a crime anyway," she said. Mr Arpaio claims that chain gangs, first instituted in America in the 17th century, are legally permissible and violate no civil rights, because each inmate "volunteers". But the alternative is to spend 23 hours a day

locked in the tiny cells. Arizona prisons, like many in the United States, are badly overcrowded. Mr Arpaio's solution was to house hundreds of his 6,000 prisoners in old army tents, where they suffer summer temperatures of almost 50C. He banned coffee and tobacco, replaced hot meals with sandwiches, stopped showing films, and

limited television to one set for 500 inmates. He is predictably unpopular inside the prison, but outside gets 60 per cent public approval. "Prison is punishment, so let's punish," he declared. Since he was elected to run law and order for Maricopa County's 2.5 million residents in 1992, he has broken new boundaries in unforgiving

penal enforcement, while gaining mostly favourable publicity. His predecessors did not do well: one extracted four false confessions in a multiple murder case; another fiddled expenses on a trip to New Mexico to marry his ninth wife. Mr Arpaio had little to lose. After putting his prisoners in tents, his next act was to form a posse of 2,200 volunteers, 300 of them armed. Civil rights activists feared this bourgeois band of lawyers, business people and corrupt retirees — with minimum training in handling weapons or outlaws — would cause a terrible accident or wrongful killing. But the sheriff's luck has held. One posse member was indicted on 23 counts of property fraud in June, but as he was the Republican state governor, Fife Symington, and the alleged offences happened before Arpaio's power, the sheriff could hardly be

blamed. Mr Symington has turned in his six-shooter and resigned from the posse (but not the governorship). The sheriff introduced chain gangs last year for men, following such models of penal enlightenment as Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee, although they have modified or abandoned their programmes. But the final indictment should be that the Arpaio approach to recidivism has not worked. No evidence has emerged that criminals have been referred to avoid "Tent City". Crime figures in Arizona — excluding those which are drug-related — mirror similar states. But few complain. The sheriff produces great publicity. On Tuesday the Republican presidential candidate, Bob Dole, dropped by to announce that the sheriff's experiment amounted to "my kind of jail". The sheriff's popularity rose yet another point.

Florida shows mercy to grandfather who spent 44 years on run

EDDIE BROWN ran away from a Florida chain gang 44 years ago, afraid for his life. Now at the age of 64, with 27 grandchildren, he can stop looking over his shoulder. Florida no longer wants him back in prison. Justice Abraham Gorges of Brooklyn supreme court is expected to dismiss the case against him. "I feel, Lord have mercy, what a burden off my back.

It's just tremendous to be free," said Mr Brown. Scott Buell, his lawyer, proclaimed: "It's a great day for justice." Mr Brown fled a chain gang in Zephyrhills after serving six months of a five-year sentence for robbing a Miami shop of \$120 (£80) in 1952. He is black, and said he ran away because a white guard had threatened him and he feared he would be killed.

Making his way to New York five years later, he took jobs that did not require background checks, like scrubbing floors and shining shoes. While living in Brooklyn last year, his past caught up with him. After a minor traffic accident police checked his licence, found a warrant for the robbery and arrested him. Florida issued an extradition order, but agreed last week

to stop the proceedings. "Somewhere along the way, common sense must prevail," said Dexter Douglas, the Florida governor's general counsel. Mr Brown, who suffers from high blood pressure, diabetes and heart trouble, feared prison would kill him. "I just told my wife, 'If I have to go back, make sure the insurance is all paid up.' I told her to come pick up my body." — AP.

Why Clinton could lose by winning in the parallel race for Congress



Martin Walker in Washington

BILL CLINTON is so far ahead in the presidential race that the focus is shifting to the Democratic Party's chances of regaining control of Congress, which they lost two years ago to Newt Gingrich's surging Republican revolution. There is much at stake in the race, bringing a Democratic Congress could revitalise Mr Clinton's aborted agenda of domestic reforms — from health care to college grants and job training programmes. But it could also pave the way for a divisive battle for the Clinton inheritance in the contest for the Democratic presidential nomination in 2000. On one side stands Mr Clinton's centrist "New Democrat" project, based in the dominant new political geography of the middle-class suburbs, and represented by Vice-President Al Gore. On the other is the traditional Democratic Party of trade protection, labour unions, the urban base and the New Deal, represented by the congressional leader, Dick Gephardt. Mr Clinton may lose by winning. The stronger the Democratic majority in Congress, the better the chances of Mr Gephardt and the liberals — still suspicious of the president's readiness to compromise with the Republicans on balancing the budget and welfare reform — taking the party back to its roots. There is much at stake in the 435 House and 33 Senate races this November. The majority party in each chamber wins the crucial chairmanship and the majority of seats on all the committees. It selects the House Speaker and Senate majority leader, who have almost complete control of the legislative agenda. The newly popular "generic poll" by Gallup, which asks how people will vote in the congressional race, shows the Democrats ahead 52-42. This margin has held steady since



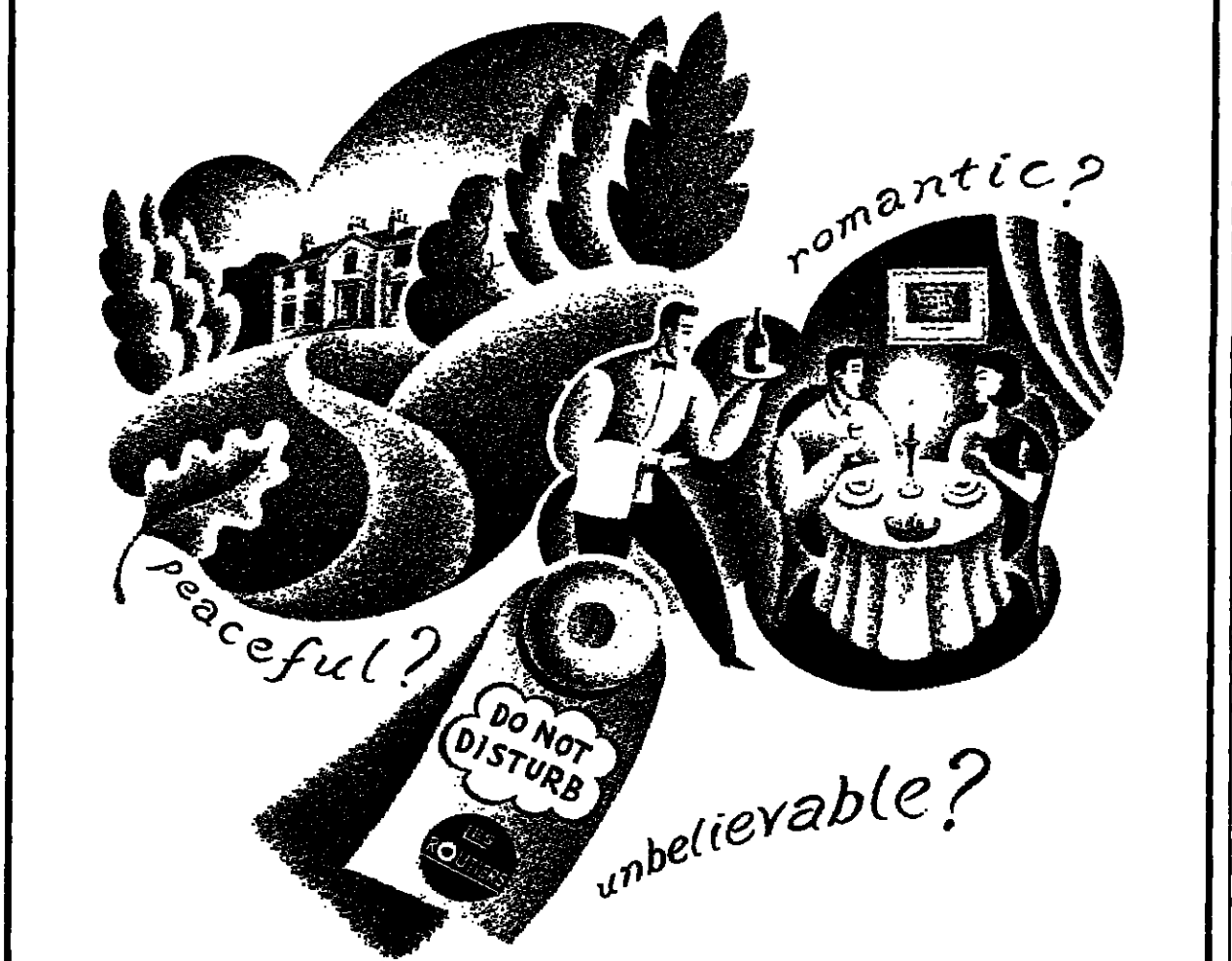
A shaken but unharmed Bob Dole, who fell off when leaning against a dummy railing on a campaign platform in Chico, California. A photographer broke the fall of the Republican candidate, who joked he had "won a third Purple Heart" and "at least I fell into good company" when he resumed his attack on "Hollywood values". PHOTOGRAPH: ROCK WALKER

last month's Democratic convention in Chicago. The Democrats need to win 19 seats in the House of Representatives and three in the Senate to recover their majority, and are counting on Mr Clinton's coat-tails to carry them to the target. Although many Democrats distanced themselves from the president two years ago, when he was at his political nadir, they are clamouring for him to campaign in their districts. But the Republicans are significantly ahead in fund-raising. The national Republican campaign committee raised \$63 million (£40 million) in the first half of this year — three times more than its Democratic equivalent. They also have the ostensible advantage of incumbency, although many of their 73 freshmen — who won their seats two years ago — are sitting on perilously small majorities. The last two occasions the Republicans recaptured the

House, in 1946 and 1952, they lost control two years later — a pattern the Democrats are convinced they can repeat. But the long-term trend of the south and west becoming ever more solidly conservative favours the Republicans, as another wave of 20 veteran Democrats retire. In Texas alone, the Republicans have a strong chance of picking up six seats from retiring Democrats. Given such losses, the Democrats will have to win at least 30 seats to be sure of even a razor-thin majority in the House. In the Senate, where they are in danger of losing the Massachusetts seat of the low-key John Kerry to the popular liberal Republican governor William Weld, the task may be even harder. The Democrats will have to fight hard to retain the seats vacated by the retiring senators Sam Nunn in Georgia and Bill Bradley in New Jersey. They look likely to lose the Alabama seat of the retir-

ing Howell Heflin and David Pryor's seat in Arkansas, where the Democratic Party has been demoralised by the conviction for fraud of Governor Jim Guy Tucker. But the Republicans could have trouble holding the seats of the venerable rightwing Senator Strom Thurmond, aged 96, of South Carolina, and Senator Jesse Helms, aged 75, of North Carolina. The Democrats also have a strong chance of winning Republican Senate seats in New Hampshire and Wyoming. The Republicans are retreating fast from any association with Mr Gingrich's now-discredited Contract with America, which helped them win two years ago. But they are likely to retain enough seats to at least slow any ambitious Democratic legislative agenda, while the Democrats launch an internal battle for the Clinton succession.

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مكتبة الأصيل

Party before country

Major cannot rule with the Tories under siege

INSIDE the space of a week, the two great political questions of our time have been laid starkly before us yet again. The first is whether the Labour Party wants power enough to accept Tony Blair's root-and-branch rewriting of its aims and values; the answer to that is "Yes, at least for the moment". The second, which exploded with renewed force yesterday, is whether the Conservative Party can achieve a sufficient consensus on Europe to give it a chance of deserving to govern once again. The answer to that one, on yesterday's evidence, is "Not yet".

The idea that there has been, or could be a Conservative truce on Europe is fanciful. It would certainly be desirable from a national point of view, but there is not the slightest sign of it. For one thing, outside events — like the timetable of European summits and the shameful, EMU-motivated fiddling of the figures in the French Budget this week — constantly work against any such aim. For another, this is a party in disequilibrium, which cannot simply decree itself to be at peace, however much it might wish it. The political calendar — the party conference, the election, the leadership question — constantly dictates the renewed taking of positions.

Malcolm Rifkind didn't have to make a speech which has been widely asserted to be against the single currency this week. But he did it because he is thinking about the leadership if and when John Major goes. The six pro-European Tory grandees didn't have to take their stand against any rejection of the single currency this week. But they did so because they know what the Europhobes have got planned for the party conference — where they aim to bounce the party into an earlier referendum than the Government wants, or even into outright rejection. Even the Europhobes could have kept quiet this

week too, except for the fact that they are bent on victory at Bournemouth and on capturing the party from Mr Major within the next 12 months.

Above all, the Government did not have to stir events over Europe this week. Yet it did so, especially over beef, because Mr Major recognises the impossibility of standing still, whether on the BSE or EMU. BSE, you and he may have thought, had been settled at Florence. But nothing can be settled where the European question is concerned because the Europhobes are not interested in settlements. They want a beef war as well as their demands on the single currency. So Mr Major and Douglas Hogg have reopened the deal they struck at Florence, in another vain hope that by throwing scraps to the pursuing dogs, the pack will lose its appetite. Unfortunately for Mr Major, this appeasement only encourages the Europhobes to up their demands.

This is the context in which the massively belated heavyweight counter-attack on behalf of the Cabinet from the Grandee Six, as well as Sir Edward Heath's fresh blast last night, have to be seen. If Douglas Hurd means what he said at lunchtime yesterday, that the Tory pro-Europeans "are no longer going to shut up" then this is going to be a stormy autumn.

But what is the alternative? The Conservatives are in a continuing state of internal siege. The pro-Europeans, and even the Euro-pragmatists, can no longer pretend that masterly inactivity will guarantee that Britain stays in the fast changing European arena. From their point of view, internal party conflict is the lesser of two evils. The tragedy for the rest of us is that, all the while, whether over beef or the currency, this country's European policy and influence are daily being sacrificed on the altar of John Major's attempts to manage his destabilised party.

Claiming the high moral ground

Whatever politicians contrive, it's never the Donne thing

IT IS ENCOURAGING to discover that John Major wants to fight the next election on the high moral ground. It would be even more encouraging were there any general agreement about where this ground is to be found. This is not somewhere like Lithuania or Leatherhead, where locations and boundaries are plotted in all respectable maps. The high moral ground as defined by politicians, unhappily, tends to mean little more than the ground they find it convenient to occupy.

On John Major's definition, the heart of the high moral ground is individuals' freedom to do as they choose. So cutting the share of national wealth that goes to the state is a moral action. Cutting the size of government to give people more scope to make their own choices, bringing down taxes, extending deregulation — all these cherished Conservative tenets belong, by happy coincidence, on the high moral ground too. Others would draw their maps differently. For them, the high moral ground entails a commitment to treating all sections of our society equitably and decently, even if that sometimes implies that the prosperous may have to contribute more. Take the lines of John Donne: "No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the Continent, a part of the main; if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friends or thine own were"; these, for them, are an indispensable part of any worthwhile delin-

ation of the high moral ground — not merely the pretty conceit of a long-dead poet.

Short of a kind of Ordinance Survey of Ethics, no consensus will ever exist on the whereabouts of this territory. So if politicians are genuinely eager to set up camp on it, they might usefully start with more modest and practical tests. They might, for example, commit themselves not knowingly to tell lies about their opponents. Tony Blair is not a devil with staring red eyes. Michael Howard, even at Tory conferences, is not the reincarnation of Judge Jeffreys. Paddy Ashdown is not some kind of juvenile anarchist with secret designs on the monarchy or the liberalisation of banned drugs. There are even things to be said for Dr Brian Mahwinney. Let them also pledge to cost their opponents' promises on the basis of arithmetic which commands at least a measure of credibility with non-partisan observers. Let them promise not to pretend through the coming election campaign that issues like Europe and Northern Ireland are best left undiscussed — a pretence they maintained throughout the 1992 campaign. Let them turn aside from character assassination, and condemn it when it occurs in newspapers which support them. Should they make and maintain such resolutions, and to others like them, we may begin to believe that their dedication to the high moral ground is real, and not just contrived for PR purposes. Otherwise, certainly not.

Another one lost to the SFO

The answer? Specialist tribunals for complex cases

WHICH is worse: a long, drawn-out, 18-month complex fraud trial that exhausts jury, judge and the criminal justice process; or simpler, shorter and more focused prosecutions requiring defendants to face not one but two successive trials? The judiciary made its view clear after a marathon fraud case in the early 1990s that it did not want a repeat performance. Multiple charges and multiple defendants must be avoided. Accordingly, the prosecution severed and chopped up the Maxwell indictments into two separate parcels only for the jury to reject the first in January and the judge the second yesterday. In the words of Mr Justice Buckley, the presiding high court judge, the trial was sending out the wrong signal, namely that "the authorities have not accepted the verdict of a jury". Faced, as he saw it, with "an affront to fair play and decency", justice required a stay to the proceedings.

Once more the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) and the jury system is under scrutiny. Yet the arguments which led to the creation of the SFO still stand. Only the naive — and fraudsters — could want the work handed over to the criminal prosecution service. Complex fraud requires specialist teams. City investigators yesterday were specialist about the resurrection of specialist juries. But returning to a medieval institution — fishmongers trying people who sold bad fish — is not a solution. Remember, it was the judge who threw out this latest prosecution. Moreover, he did so with an inappropriate reference to the suffering of Kevin Maxwell's wife. He should have been more circumspect. If the plight of families was weighed, few suspects would ever go to trial. The SFO was set up by the Roskill committee, which also wanted specialist tribunals instead of juries. In reality, Roskill was right.



Letters to the Editor

Pension scheming

DAVID Brindle (An acid test for Labour, September 17) is quite right. Pension reform is now a key issue for Labour. The thousands of pensioners who marched through London last weekend were not on their own. There were many more not-yet-pensioners only too well aware that their own retirement could find them in even greater difficulty. That is why Paul Flynn's press conference was packed, why Barbara Castle and Peter Townsend's pamphlet is a best-seller, and why Labour will have to give more serious thought to the issue than it has so far. It is a concern not confined to today's pensioners but tomorrow's also. That's a lot of votes. David Hughes, 42 Langroyd Road, London SW17 7PL.

WHAT EVER happened to the bright idea propounded by the Conservatives in the 1970s that Sir Keith Joseph's reserve pension scheme should be fully funded with contributions invested in equities? Like a meteor in the political firmament it disappeared out of sight. But if the private pensions industry can enjoy all the advantages of investment in the market, why not state pensions? The privatised utilities would afford a safe haven for contributions from the public sector, even if the Treasury and pension funds were hostile. John Burrows, 50 Westmount Road, London SE9 1JE.

THE party's document Security in Retirement does not say that Labour would continue the Tory policy of price-indexing the basic pension. It does say that Labour "would not reduce this commitment", and that the basic pension "must play a role" in "enabling pensioners to share fairly in rising national prosperity". To play such a role, the basic pension would obviously have to increase faster than prices. Yet how much faster? Security in Retirement leaves that to be decided after the election. The party should have the courage to say so now. Tony Lines, 93 Grove Park, London SE5 8LE.

More on the frantic search for a little peace and quiet

RESPONSES to the admirable review by Henry Porter of growing pressures on the countryside (Crowded out, September 16) fail to recognise that its future health is intimately related to that of our towns and cities. What we have seen over recent years is the continued loss of countryside to urban development over 11,000 hectares each year — and rising traffic levels as people and jobs move out of urban areas. To tackle these pressures we need to improve the quality of our towns and cities by encouraging investment and redevelopment at the same time as safeguarding the countryside. This should not mean town cramming. Large areas of derelict and underused land and buildings exist in many urban areas and we can get much more out of the housing that has already been built. Yet we will achieve little if we continue to plan on the basis of an extrapolation of past, unsustainable trends. New planning which seeks to change these trends through better protection for greenfield sites and positive investment in our urban areas is vital for the health of both town and country. Neil Stiden, Assistant Secretary, Council for the Protection of Rural England, Warwick House, 25 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 0PP.

has a path on the verge. It leads to one house, a letter box and a small redundant Norman church. The local authority has a duty to maintain paths, and let it not be said that it should fail. For 100 yards a brand new Tarmac path 1.2m wide (an EU standard path to cater for wheelchairs) gleams the side of the lane. But worse, to keep in a strip of grass, the Highways Department has deep-kerb-lined the path. It looks like Brookside. This little bit of countryside is a touch less remote and leafy, the cowpits which once flourished here will have gone as will the amenities, together with a medieval boundary stone that was in the way. It cost around £5,000. This is not a comment about mobility, Europe or road safety. But it is a comment on priorities. If we do not readdress them, especially at local level, Henry Porter's nightmare will creep closer. Charles & Caroline Kenyon, Beech House, Kingerby, Market Rasen, Lincs LN9 3FF.

HENRY PORTER says that people have the right to tear around the Lake District in a motorboat. In fact, powerboats are allowed on just one of our many lakes, and even there you will generally find the landscape connected "with the quiet of the sky", to quote a former resident. Chris Collier, Chief Executive, Cumbria Tourist Board, Ashleigh, Holly Road, Windermere, Cumbria LA3 2AQ.

LAST summer I was in Yosemite, California, climbing the track beside the Falls and I stopped for a rest at a viewpoint about two-thirds up the climb. There, overlooking the stupendous view, was someone yattering into a mobile phone. "Yes, it's a really great view, marv, you'd hardly believe it, so quiet too..." On Saturday I was walking in the Lake District and sat down on top of Harrison Stickle, in the Langdales, for lunch. A few other people were also within 30 metres or so of us. Then, once again, came the familiar wattle of a mobile phone. Could anyone suggest what can be done about these things? Michael Pidd, 4 Prospect Drive, Hest Bank, Lancaster LA3 6EX.

INCREASINGLY pernicious is the noise from light aircraft, because these can dump their pollution where so far the ordinary polluter cannot reach. This summer — from places as far apart as the Quantocks, the Northern Highlands, the Cotswolds, the little town of Dorchester-on-Thames — people have suffered their incessant buzz like that of some unwelcome fly. If working-class youths on motor-bikes contaminated neighbourhoods like these, the police would soon see them off. Yet these yuppy joyriders of the sky contaminate the rural tranquility of thousands below without any kind of legislation to stop them. C V Jones, 27 Weymouth Court, Grange Road, Sutton, Surrey SM2 6SH.

HENRY Porter's plea to revalue the countryside was read to the background noise of the Highways Department JCB cementing our very own little tragedy. This remote and leafy lane

New "Labour"

ON Monday's Radio 4 Today programme, Tony Blair said that the word "socialism" was no longer appropriate for New Labour. On the same day a Christian Socialist talking on Stop the Week said that Tony Blair has identified himself as a Christian Socialist. Does this mean that in future New Labour will be known as the Christian Party? (Dr) Dorothy Rowe, 40 Highbury Grove, London N5 2AG.

WHY doesn't Kim Howells suggest humanely phasing out the word "Labour" in his party's name? Quite clearly, if no longer has any relevance, the word "Labour" would then be free to adopt the obvious choice: New Conservatives. (Dr) R F Carter, 26 Stanbridge Road, London SW15 1DX.

THE offensive word "Labour" is reminiscent of a far more honest way than other commentators who are starting to notice that reactionaries are rising up. For some such commentators, environmentalism is dead. If that's the case, why the furore amid the armed ranks catalogued by Rowell? If the movement has failed, just why are so many right-wing organisations, from governments to multinationals, declaring war on those who would dare to fetter free trade? Ah! A global conspiracy? Or am I just being paranoid? There is not so much a grass-roots backlash as an orchestrated attempt by reactionaries to legitimise what it is they have always taken for granted — their previously untouchable policies of irreversible destruction. Green activists should take heart from the fact that they have been recognised. If not, why would the forces of the



diately conveys a feel-good factor. It suggests nice things like seafood restaurants, white wine and lobster, followed, shortly after, by wobbly jelly. John Sheeran, 3 Southfield Rise, Cheltenham.

HOW about "The Every-thing to all People Party"? Don Newman, 377 Commonside Street, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 1HF.

I'VE thought for a while now that there was something eerily familiar about the case of T Blair and the quondam Labour Party, but I couldn't quite place it. The headline on Martin Kettle's piece on September 13 (He regards the party he leads as a failure) reminded me. Of course: if the Labour Party is not worthy of Tony Blair, Tony Blair will have to elect a new party. W L Webb, 94 Park Hill, London SW4 9PE.

IN its quest for aids to forgetting Labour's should consider calling itself "New Label". As a brand name, New Label Party sounds sufficiently like the old product to retain traditional consumers, while suggesting the local and lite image that is so essential in this new land of lost content. Patrick Kinnersly, West Wallow, Romsey, Hants SO51 6BY.

IF Tony Blair is a Liberal (September 16) then I am a doughnut. Phil Rimmer, Chair, Liberal Party Policy Committee, 2 Elmgreen Close, Church Street North, London E15 4BS.

Please include a full postal address, even on e-mailed letters, and a telephone number. We may edit letters: shorter ones are more likely to appear. We regret we cannot acknowledge those not used.

Guerrilla war against greens

ANDREW Rowell's excellent article (Armies of the right, Society, September 16) paints the picture of the resistance to environmentalism in a far more honest way than other commentators who are starting to notice that reactionaries are rising up. For some such commentators, environmentalism is dead. If that's the case, why the furore amid the armed ranks catalogued by Rowell? If the movement has failed, just why are so many right-wing organisations, from governments to multinationals, declaring war on those who would dare to fetter free trade? Ah! A global conspiracy? Or am I just being paranoid? There is not so much a grass-roots backlash as an orchestrated attempt by reactionaries to legitimise what it is they have always taken for granted — their previously untouchable policies of irreversible destruction. Green activists should take heart from the fact that they have been recognised. If not, why would the forces of the

right operate by stealth, secret funding and cartels-style control of so-called "green industry" committees? Anita Roddick, Chief executive, The Body Shop, Watersmead, Littlehampton, West Sussex BN17 6LS.

Broad canvas

THE point of our new first-floor galleries is precisely to show more portraits than we could previously, and better (September 16). In particular, we have brought out a great number of portrait busts from storage, and have supplemented the paintings with cases to show drawings and photographs. Ruskin is missing partly because the greatest portrait of Ruskin by Millais is in private hands. Mrs Gaskell is in our displays at Bodleywydan Castle. Charles Saumarez Smith, Director, National Portrait Gallery, St Martin's Place, London WC2H 0HE.

A good sport

YOU merit a red card for claiming that the Guardian is poised to "blow the whistle" on television sports events (Home news, September 17). BBC Television has substantially increased its investment in sports coverage in the last two years. This has led to the renewal of several long-term contracts from the Olympics, Open championship and Grand National to the World Athletics Championships, the Football World Cup and Commonwealth Games in 1996 and Euro 2000.

This makes plain that the BBC will remain a major player in televised sport into the next century. Yes, the cost of sports rights is escalating and there are tough decisions to make on delivering value for money to viewers on a flat licence-fee income. But the quality and appeal of BBC sports coverage remain hugely valued by the British public and by most sports bodies and administrators. Will Wyatt, Chief Executive, Broadcast, BBC Television Centre, Wood Lane, London W12 7RJ.

A Country Diary

NORTHERBERLAND: Summer is retreating. We now have a source of both field mushrooms and brambles within walking distance of the house, although meeting friends on the prow I am evasive as to the whereabouts of the fungi. Autumn walks are a treat among the purples and gold of late summer, knapweed a foil for small greenish-white butterflies and the fading ranks of meadow sweet in the ditches. I love the cloying scent of wild honeysuckle in the air. This morning was spent decorating our 13th century church for Harvest Festival. Skilful hands transformed the motley profusion of flowers and foliage weeping from plastic buckets into attractive displays on stands, statuary, cornice and colonnade. We work hard but there is a good deal of crack as well. Soon the mechanical hedge cutters will be snarling up our narrow country lanes. They are an economic necessity for keeping the place tidy but alarming to meet when one is astride a horse and they have

put paid to some of my favourite blackberry hedge-rows. A cyclist told me that he suffered punctures through thorns and spears left on the highway by these machines but most contractors are considerate and try to catch the cuttings in the box provided. A local ornithological group invited me to join them cleaning nest boxes in the Lyne Valley. This is a study area for various species: tawny owl, merlin, great and blue tit, pied flycatcher, sparrow hawk and goosander. We listen for singing cock birds because our leader tells us that every vocal male means a pair. Oak leaves, dead grass, woodruff and tiny crustacean oak which have been discarded from consumed insects have to be cleared from the boxes and we used torches to inspect our housekeeping efforts. In one box which had been vacated by a tawny owl, a brown long-eared bat had taken up residence. We could actually see the female hanging, one infant attached. VERONICA HEATH

مكتبة الامم المتحدة

Diary
Matthew Norman

RIVAL has emerged to Harold Brooks-Baker, purveyor of the "Burke's World Book of..." series. He is HRH Prince Kevin of the Principality of Hutt River Province. "Special people," writes the Prince's bondsman in Australia, Lord Peter Regensburg, to Professor Gerald Mars in Hampstead, "have taken notice of you, and want you to get what you really want..." "Administration fee," the professor was invited to buy a "Royal Award Certificate" entitling him to be called "The Honourable Professor G Mars, of the Principality of Hutt River Province." Harold Brooks-Baker is outraged. "Oh yes, I know all about Hutt, and it's complete nonsense," he explains. "At least people who buy my World Book can get their money back, but where can people who are dissatisfied with Hutt go to complain?" How reassuring it is to see Harry coming down so hard on charlatans in his profession.

ATTEMPTS to contact the psychic Sir Bernard Ingham (soon to be confirmed, we hope, as Diary astrologer) consistently fail. We tried to call yesterday about newspaper reports concerning how Fergie used to consult him regularly, calling him "Daddy" and sitting under his crystal "healing" pyramid for days on end. However, Bernie, a likely replacement for Mystic Meg on the Lottery, was driving to Huddersfield for a seance, and would not answer. We look forward to a nice chat early next week.

NOOK Magazine, Brandreth's Brainstorm is better than ever. This week, the Chester MP surpasses himself with a feature called Think Sideways. "The MacDonald family from Perth went on a skiing holiday one summer," poses Giles. "The snow was good, the weather was cold, and soon after they got home it was Christmas. It's all true — but can you decide how?" If and when you can, try this: "A man fabled throughout the land for being an imbecile and wearing clothes rejected as too facetious by Russell Grant is elected to serve in the Moot of Parliaments. It's all true — but can you decide how?"

In the Spectator, wine waiter Taki-George tries to ingratiate himself with an old employer. Having poured champagne at Jemima Khan's wedding, T-G now devotes a long and rambling pidgin-English outpouring of hero worship to her father, Jimmy Goldsmith, and his hilarious Referendum Party. Some will find it cringeworthy, but not everyone. "He's rather sweet, in an silly sort of way," says one of Sir James's intimate circle. "It's just that he's so desperate to suck up to us, he can get over-excited." Perhaps so, but perhaps T-G should consider whether, after its recent problems with neo-fascist supporters, what the Referendum Party really needs right now is the public endorsement of a convicted drug smuggler.

SENSATIONAL news from Millbank: Oofy Wegg-Frosser has smashed his own rapid rebuttal world record. After the Hartlepool MP was pictured in a newspaper arriving for a party, word spread that Mandy Mandelson had been spotted on Wednesday night in the Ministry of Sound, a trendy London club, wearing only a gold lamé posing pouch and performing a solo rendition of the Birdy Song. Was this true? "No," said Oofy, in 0.517 seconds, murdering his previous world best — set at an altitude, in Mexico City — of 0.625. "He's the Michael Johnson of rapid rebuttal," says an awed fan. "It's hard to believe he's human."

A WOMAN has been charged with assault after an incident on an interstate highway in Florida. Montrose Herbert told police that she fired her handgun when upset by a gesture from Joshua Lucas, 23, who pulled down his shorts and mooned at her from a truck. Mr Lucas has been charged with the lesser offence of lewd and lascivious conduct.

THIS UNCERTAINTY IS UPSETTING MY WIFE DEARLY



Private lives and public snapshots

Commentary
Peter Preston

TAKE two loving couples in swimsuits, a millionaire's yacht on a steamy French Riviera day, one angry Prime Minister's wife, and David Frost auditioning to be the next Archbishop of Canterbury: mix thoroughly, and what have you got? A monster magazine of a moral dilemma, that's what.

Mrs Norma Major, wife and fledgling author, put a number of very sympathetic propositions to Frost and his TV audience this week. Proposition One: "I think anybody is entitled to an element of privacy. I don't think the public has a right to know everything and be everywhere." Proposition Two: "Your house and your garden should be sacrosanct — or if you're doing something which is obviously private, and I think a holiday is obviously private."

ously private." Proposition Three: "I think we could make a start with cameras, and the fact that they can take a photograph of someone obviously in their house or in their garden, which is clearly private property."

Mrs Major was talking new legislation. She was also talking about three pages in the Sunday Express last month with the front-page billing: "The Majors' holiday snaps". These were not big on John and Norma, relaxing with family in a "sumptuous yellow-painted villa hidden in the lush hills above the Bay of Cannes".

But they made a meal of daughter Elaine and boyfriend Luke having a sun-cum-canoodle session aboard the yacht of Lord Harris of Peckham (carpet-selling owner of lush villa) and matched it with pictures of son James and girlfriend Elaine similarly engaged. The captions to this pile of snatched, distant and unaware snaps were mini-templates of tact. "Full cuddling underway, she passive and receptive to his dominant mouth-to-mouth resuscitation."

You could see why mother Major was fed up. You might even instinctively agree that

Something Must Be Done. But and she does me the migraine — what?

I had a tiny role in drawing up the editors' code which the Press Complaints Commission now polices. It generally rules out "intrusions or enquiries into an individual's private life without his or her consent". This includes "the use of long-lens photography to take pictures of people on private property" without that same consent. And it defines "private property" as "any private residence, together with its gardens and outbuildings, but excluding any adjacent fields or parkland and the surrounding parts of the property within the unaided view of passers-by".

What on earth was that all about? Basically that the ordinary home or garden was off-limits — but that if you happened to be, say, the Duke of Edinburgh, fishing in a river on the Balmoral estate, 15 miles from your front door and in clear view from a public road, things got a bit more complicated. Was the Balmoral estate "a garden"? Specifically, if there was a "right to privacy", was that a right which could be indefinitely extended by wealth and ownership of land? The Duke

with his rolling acres: the ordinary bloke with his potting shed patch. What kind of "right" was that?

Mrs Major's problem is similarly vexing. Her Huntington home and modest garden, let's agree, should be lens-free. Lord Harris's yellow pad, as temporary home, may arguably be the same (though French law is hugely different anyway). But the deck of a yacht in the bay? Is this conceivably "home"? Would other, passing boats have had an "unaided view" of that? Was it, in effect, merely the extension of a public beach? Was it (citing another bit of the code) more like a hotel bedroom than a hotel lobby or hotel landing? Clearly not.

The code, of course, is self-regulatory, not legally binding. But any embryo law is bound to follow roughly the

They just want to be left alone, and have done nothing to deserve otherwise

same path, and grapple with the selfsame problems. Barriers, well-paid to endure such fresh challenges, are naturally enthusiastic to try. (How many times did the office call, m'lud, thus turning a straightforward holiday into a working week?) Those of us who don't relish such stuff, however, may be excused for taking a powder. The Press Complaints Commission examined 43 substan-

tive cases in its last three-month report: only two concerned privacy.

All this, though, does not quite meet the force of Mrs Major's wrath. She is upset because her children are upset. Are the sons and daughters of public people automatically fair snapping game? I have a lot of sympathy for James Major, an M&S trainee manager who fell in love with a married woman. It happens all the time; it has nothing to do with his dad, even when delivering "moral" lectures to the nation. I have even more sympathy for Elaine Major, who just wants to live an ordinary life. These two aren't, for instance, Bob Dole's daughter, openly putting the family history on the line for her father at the Republican convention. They aren't the voluble children of Ronald Reagan. They just want to be left alone, and have done nothing to deserve otherwise.

But law? American legislation has one set of rules for the average citizen and quite different rules for politicians or film stars or public officials. We (like Mrs Major) don't make that distinction: the privacy we envisage extends equally to the extraordinary citizen, who is usually (best case) an MP hopping up and down, or (worst case) the Duchess of York. Remember the toe sucked five years and sued over under French privacy law is umbilically connected to the writing hand that now causes her such floundering angst.

Mrs Major isn't keen on legislation. He is right. Mrs Major is cheesed off about groyne snooping in a grotty world. She is right too. But these are twin tracks; and never the twain should meet.

ling all power, not just the power of the state. The aim is effective but minimum government. This means that liberty must be protected by the state, as well as from the state. As our party constitution says, people may be "enslaved by poverty". That is why we, in 1870, began the system of state education. It is why we, in 1906, began constructing the welfare state.

Governments which are not willing to tax and spend when the nation demands it cannot defend liberty. I can see no evidence that Tony Blair understands this. He is currently embroiled in a mock auction with the Tories to see who can offer the lowest level of tax. That auction, if true, could well see the destruction of the welfare state and public services as we know them. The action of a natural Liberal would be to defend these services first, cut taxes later.

To suggest otherwise shows a misunderstanding of Liberalism (and probably a misunderstanding of Tony Blair). His discomfort with devolution, coolness about electoral reform and ambiguity about the reform of the House of Lords shows that he is a pragmatist with his own agenda, at the top of which is his desire to win the election.

NEW LABOUR is an agenda, not a philosophy. Perhaps "Blairism" will come next, but if so even the plot, let alone the script, has yet to be written. If the time comes, we in the Liberal Democrats will listen to that agenda and judge it, as Liberals, on its merits, point out its weaknesses and support its strengths — just as we have with every other government. It may be true that we shall be listening more often to ideas with which we are comfortable. Yet this will not be because New Labour has ideologically metamorphosed into Liberalism, but because the practical imperatives of modern politics will have led to a convergence of ideals in the centre ground. As to the political realignment, that discussion awaits an intimation of philosophy.

Next week in Brighton we Liberal Democrats shall discuss our own distinctive agenda. Among other issues, we shall discuss the improvement of our education system; law and order; the protection of the environment; and we shall develop our ideas for the creation of a strong and stable economy. Running through the veins of our conference, detectable in every motion and on the lips of every speaker, will be modern Liberalism. It is founded on the traditions of the Liberal Party and bolstered by ideas that led to the inception of the SDP. Liberalism is not there because of electoral expediency or the bankruptcy of an alternative ideology; it is there because it is an instinctively understood principle and philosophy which lies in the heart of everyone who is a genuine Liberal Democrat.

On perhaps I'm being unfair to Labour? Perhaps on a wall in a locked room in John Smith House there is a top-secret agenda for urgently needed political and social reform? Perhaps the pragmatists have a strategy for the election only, under the slogan "We now, pay later"? I just pray that they don't lose the key to the room. Or does Tony Blair, by sleight of hand, hope to find it in Fanny Ashdown's back pocket on the day after the election? A borrowed philosophy would be better than none at all.

Alex Carlisle is Liberal Democrat Home Affairs spokesman

Envy, stupidity and malice in Literary London



Bel Littlejohn

WHAT was it that Swift once said? I forget, but when I wrote my new novel, Fluffy The Dolphin At Sea In Thatcher's Britain, I shared with Swift a fierce moral indignation at, as Thackeray put it, The Way We Live Now. In my novel, Fluffy The Dolphin becomes a junior doctor at one of the London teaching hospitals. Even at a time of crying need for young physicians, Fluffy finds himself discriminated against because he is unable to hold many of the fiddly tools of the doctor's trade in either of his flippers. Even though he has many superhuman skills — he can balance a bouncy ball on the end of his nose, he can make high-pitched squeaky noises, he can waggle his tail in the air whilst eating raw fish — none of them is recognised by the narrow-minded powers-that-be in the hospital. So Fluffy the Dolphin finds himself thrown out on the bitter London streets, his bouncy ball his only companion.

I wished to write a panoramic Victorian novel, the novel Dickens and Balzac would have written if only they'd thought of it. First, a novel touching on several different London worlds. So Fluffy the Dolphin, rejected and alone, enters the world of London publishing, a vicious world where it is possible to slog your guts out writing two brilliant novels only for them to attract so-so reviews from critics too raddled with stupidity, envy and malice to recognise their true historic worth. There Fluffy meets a colourful array of characters, to whom I have given some of my most inventive — and scorchingly satirical — names.

There is the devilishly suave editor Geoffrey Cheese-Sandwich, who is always eating — yes! — cheese sandwiches. There is the famously acerbic triple-barrelled critic John Very-Bad-Acne, who, suffering from a major skin problem, takes it out on the new novels he is sent for review. There is Jasper Jollyfat, the overweight and sluggish publisher. And, finally, towering above these riff-raff as a figure of real moral and aesthetic stature, there is the saintly, complex, gorgeous and yet brilliantly talented — but disgracefully under-recognised — novelist Bella Johnlittie.

Believe me, I know how ambitious the project is: yet I have gone to every length to research its different worlds. I have sat in operating theatres and taken notes on the demor-

alisation of doctors and the suffering of patients while the doctors have attempted to revive the body upon which I happened to be sitting. Like my heroine, Bella Johnlittie, I have spent a great deal of time — something over 40 minutes — in a high-rise block. I have even travelled on one of London's "tube-trains", so as to be able to write with consummate accuracy about a "tube-train ride" from Fiaccaidilly Circus to Stonehenge.

What was it that Juvenal once said? I forget, but he or, indeed, she would have been astonished at the intertextual uproar that has greeted my courageous literary satire. I was expecting both more laughter and more serious critical response, given my astonishing achievement at having completed this massive post-Victorian novel, with something over 250 words per page. What I certainly did not expect was a veritable barrage of av-lanches as long as my arm.

Do the small-minded purveyors of gossip and titillating have no notion of the genesis of creation? Literary London, in its characteristically solipsistic way, is doing nothing but talk about me. Do they honestly not realise that there is a larger world beyond the narrow confines of the London streets, where we are discussing Fluffy The Dolphin At Sea In Thatcher's Britain in pubs, clubs, sitting-rooms and debating-chambers the length and breadth of the country will surely be left wondering quite how self-important and self-obsessed Literary London can be. Contrary to the acres of newspaper — two paragraphs in Private Eye, not to mention one in this newspaper and another THREE in the publisher's catalogue — I must declare that the characters are all products of my — perhaps over-vivid! — imagination.

MY dashing character John Littlebell is a rogue and, like all rogues, gets my most stinging witty lines. Most women who have read the proofs — that's myself and quite a few others, including me — think he is an extraordinarily attractive and brilliant creation. Indeed, I must confess I am a little in love with him myself! Contrary to vicious rumour, my character Jasper Jollyfat, the publisher who ends up decapitated in a car-crash having first been castrated with a blunt instrument, is not based on my ex-husband, the discredited publisher Jasper Jollyhat. For one thing, his surname is spelt quite differently, and for another he rarely wears a hat. So why all the fuss, guys? Why not just sit back and enjoy a great satire on pride and self-importance, written by a self-deprecating woman with — though I say it myself — a smashing sense of humour?



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Bye bye S-word

Whatever Tony Blair has become he is certainly no Liberal, argues Alex Carlisle. Otherwise he would have a philosophy, not just an agenda

THE notion that the Labour Party, under Tony Blair, is no longer a socialist party appears finally to have dawned on the majority of political commentators. The move away from socialism, started by Neil Kinnock, has continued unabated with Tony Blair. Kim Howells, who has trotted from Trotsky via canapés with Kinnock to Beaujolais with Blair, has merely spoken the words of the new political correctness — goodbye to the S-word, hail fellow capitalists and well met! Clause 4 and poli-

ties which had for generations been the bricks and mortar with which Britain's socialist party claimed it would build the new Jerusalem — comprehensive state education, progressive taxation as a method of redistributing capital, public expenditure to bolster the welfare state — have evaporated as the Labour Party puts pursuit of electoral success before the old socialist Elysium.

If there were any doubts, last week's mischievous declarations by able Labour NCOs Steven Byers and Kim Howells that New Labour

would "humanely kill off" its links with the trade unions and socialism (though how one kills off a social and economic theory is beyond me) should have put paid to them. It's officially leaked — socialism is dead.

However, with socialism still not cold in the ground, a mad scramble has ensued to find a new label to pin to Tony Blair and the new Labour Party. Alas, many commentators have fallen into the predictable trap of calling him a Liberal. It is a crude analysis based on nothing more than a belief that, as the good ship Labour moves starboard, its next port of call must surely be Liberalism. Nonsense. Tony Blair is still as far from being a Liberal as he is from socialism.

Liberalism has always been about the pursuit of equality through the control of power. Thatcherism, despite strenuous protestations to the con-

trary, amassed enormous powers for the state. Through the erosion of local government, the imposition of state-controlled unaccountable quangos and agencies, and the consistent undermining of Parliament, Margaret Thatcher accumulated the power she needed to carry out much of her programme.

The instinct of a natural Liberal is to reverse this process by making the quangos and agencies more accountable, rejuvenate local government, and return Parliament to its role as the people's protection against the power of the state. Tony Blair does not share this instinct. He appears to admire Margaret Thatcher for her "strong government". A natural Liberal would choke on such a notion because Thatcher's strength was synonymous with the shortcomings of our democracy. Liberalism is about control-

Rose Williams

Tennessee's lost sister

WHATEVER IT says on her death certificate, it is tempting to think that Rose Williams died 53 years ago, when a surgeon removed part of her brain and gave her a less troubled but drastically reduced life. That was the moment when this almost pathologically shy but subtly pretty young woman heard a door slam on her future. But she lived on, and not without a sense of baffled happiness, to die in early September at the age of 86.



She sent Tennessee (above) a message, as accurate as it was disturbing: 'Tell Tom I love him; he stole my heart away in the dark ages'

Thanks to her brother Tennessee, with whom she had always felt a close bond, she lived a reasonably contented life. She was showered with presents and treated to excursions from the mental hospital in New York State, where she lived, by a man who felt vaguely guilty for her suffering and saw in her a version of himself: fragile, vulnerable. He recalled his impatience with her and because he moved on into another world as she could not.

Tennessee Williams and his sister were close friends as children, entering into a conspiracy against the world. Raised first in Mississippi and then St Louis, Missouri, neither felt able to function fully in a world that seemed implacable in its demands.

An attempt was made to launch Rose as a debutante. She was to be the southern belle her mother imagined herself once to have been. It was not a success. Later, with the Depression biting, she was encouraged to go out to work. She lasted a day, retreating into a toilet from which she had to be coaxed by a hastily summoned family.

To him she was "the greatest person I have known", a "dear little sister" who "deserves a crown in heaven". A play he worked on for the last decade and more of his life (*Qui Cry*) featured a brother and sister trapped together in a theatre with no audience other than themselves, clinging to one another in their isolation. It was a portrait of Rose and himself, still conspiring against the real, immured, as he liked to say, against the rush of time.

Rose and Tennessee were alike, and not merely because he, too, spent time in a mental institution, as did his mother. A symptom of her illness was jealousy, and was shrewd enough to claim that she, a chain-smoker, could not read the Surgeon General's health warning on cigarette packets.

Rose haunts Williams's plays. She is there in *The Glass Menagerie* and *A Streetcar Named Desire*, in which Blanche, finally overwhelmed by reality and terrified of mortality, is led to a mental hospital where her fantasies might protect her. She is there, too, in *Suddenly Last Summer* in which Williams saves the heroine from the fate suffered by his sister, a belated attempt to expiate his guilt at deserting Rose in her



Rose Williams at the sanatorium with her dog, Jiggs

moment of need. He was not so much plundering her life for material as paying homage to a woman with whom he associated himself so completely that in his final note to her he signed not his own name but hers. She had, in his mind, survived "in the snake pit" and he believed he knew what that meant, having been there himself. Her very name echoes through his work.

Rose has achieved a kind of immortality through his writing, as has he, and in that sense both have cheated the on-rush of time they so feared. She was not, however, a character in a play but a woman, damaged, in recoil from a world she saw as threatening, but living on with that odd blend of obliqueness and knowledge, fear and courage, humour and despair which characterises more than those who have felt the surgeon's knife. No lying in state for Rose Williams, just the knowledge that a survivor continued her lonely battle to the end.

Though she outlived him by 13 years, he had already effectively written her epitaph for her.

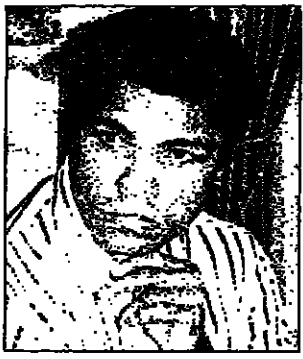
Christopher Bigsby

Rose Sabat Williams, born November 13, 1909; died September 5, 1996

Joe Elsbey Martin

Champion of the heavyweights

IN THE LIFE stories of many great personalities, there is someone who first inspired and tutored them. For tennis player Arthur Ashe, it was a black dentist in his home town of Richmond, Virginia. For Muhammad Ali, aka Cassius Clay, it was a white cop in his home town of Louisville, Kentucky, Joe Elsbey Martin, who has died aged 80. As a director of the Louisville Golden Glove programme for 40 years, Martin, who would be inducted into the Amateur Boxing Hall of Fame in 1977, was one of those rare characters around boxing who laboured for love, not money.



The collaboration with Ali (above) began one rainy night in 1954, when the skinny 12-year-old came to Martin crying that his bike had been stolen

Although the boxing programme he developed and integrated, by bringing black fighters into the gym, would produce three world champions — Muhammad Ali, Jimmy Ellis and Greg Page, all black — Martin never deserted the amateur ranks. He preferred to continue introducing youngsters to the art of pugilism while supporting himself on a policeman's salary for 34 years.

The collaboration with Ali began one rainy night in 1954, when a skinny 12-year-old Cassius Clay came up to Martin crying that his bike had been stolen while he attended an African-American trade fair in the racially segregated milieu of Louisville. Clay had sought out Martin, who was attending the fair to give boxing lessons, because somebody told him that Martin was a cop. As Martin filled out an accident report, a weeping and enraged Cassius threatened to "whup" whoever stole his bike. So Martin suggested: "Well, you better learn how to fight before you



A labour of love... Joe Elsbey Martin coaching young Tanzanians

known athlete in the world. Martin soon recognised the traits in Clay that would carry him to immortality in the squared ring. "I guess I taught a thousand boys to box," Martin says, "or at least tried to teach them. Cassius Clay, when he first began coming around, looked no better or worse than the majority. If boxers were paid bonuses on their potential like ball players are, I don't know if he would have received one. He was just ordinary, and I doubt whether any scout would

have thought much of him in his first year. About a year later, though, you could see that the little smart Alec — I mean, he's always been sassy — had a lot of potential. He stood out because he had more determination than most other boys, and the speed to get him some place... He was easily the hardest worker of any kid I ever taught."

Muhammad Ali remembers how he began his quest in school. "Sometimes I pretend they were announcing my name over the loud

speaker system, saying Cassius Clay, heavyweight champion of the world... Joe Martin was the man who started me in boxing... I trained six days a week and never drank or smoked."

Joe Elsbey Martin, discoverer and first tutor of Muhammad Ali, is survived by his wife Christine, his son and his granddaughter.

Playthell Benjamin

Joe Elsbey Martin, boxing coach, born 1916; died September 14, 1996

Les Burns

LES BURNS, who has died aged 53, became chairman of the Barrow-in-Furness leisure services committee at a time when a national newspaper had labelled the borough a cultural desert. Burns changed that perception and the town.

A one-room museum was reaped by the Dock, a unique multi-functional facility which reflected the area's proud shipbuilding and industrial past. At the town civic centre Forum Twenty Eight now provides a concert and cinema venue. Through Burns, the committee backed sell-out Halle Orchestra concerts which never looked back, and some time branch secretary — for the boilermakers' union, which merged into the GMBATU. When the television documentary *Postcards from the Edge* showed the effects of redundancy on people who had given years of service, Les Burns, a skilled and respected house music never performed in the area.

Les Burns had been on the council for 17 years, and a champion for the people he represented. For more than 30 years, he was a plater at the local Vickers shipyard (later VSEL), as well as a shop steward — and some time branch secretary — for the boilermakers' union, which merged into the GMBATU. When the television documentary *Postcards from the Edge* showed the effects of redundancy on people who had given years of service, Les Burns, a skilled and respected house music never performed in the area.

Les Burns, local councillor, born September 6, 1942; died August 25, 1996

Lloyd Turner

Tough time at tabloid

LOYD TURNER, who has died of a heart attack aged 57, was well endowed with all those qualities that make a successful tabloid editor. He succeeded himself at the Daily Star in 1986. A tough, outspoken Australian with strong newspaper credentials, he went into battle against the Sun and Daily Mirror with great gusto and looked set to survive longer than most of his contemporaries. Sadly the combination of good luck, sound judgment and peasant cunning that is essential in our surreal world ran out for him one sleepy Sunday afternoon in 1987.

The Star "lifted" the splash in that day's News of the World, implying that Jeffrey Archer had paid £2,000 to a prostitute, Monica Coughlin. In the NoW, the story had been presented as conjecture; the kind of piece we tend to run under headlines such as "Evil tongues are wagging". The Daily Star's story ishly turned rumour into supposed fact.

To compound the error, Turner persuaded Express Newspapers to fight the case. The "fragrant" Mary Archer gave evidence for her husband. It cost the Daily Star £500,000 in damages and £700,000 costs. Lloyd Turner parted company with Lord Stevens shortly after. He had been in the job seven years.

As frequently happens in such cases, Turner had not seen the offending story in advance. He was off duty that Sunday afternoon. But the editor always carries a file on and, of course, he must have known what his paper was putting on the front page.

Turner never came back after that. Those of us in Fleet Street who knew him well grieved for another casualty in the tabloid war, a good man done wrong. He was briefly editor of the Daily Post, Eddy Shah's sequel to Today. The paper died in infancy and there were no mourners. For a time he worked behind the scenes as a production executive on Today itself. More recently he was hoping to return to newspapers at the Daily Mail.

He spent the "resting" years raising prize cattle on his farm in Kent, alongside his devoted third wife, Jill Knight, herself a former Daily Express night news editor. It was Jill who virtually saved Turner's life in earlier days when he was knocking back — or so he once told me — two bottles of Scotch a day. She managed to persuade him to go on the wagon and he never looked back.

Knowing nothing of his boozing past, this powerful Aussie who spoke such good sense about newspapers soon caught my eye when I arrived from the Daily Mirror to breathe new life into the sinking Daily Express. There was talk of him upsetting the

management as an aggressive National Union of Journalists (father of the chapel (shop steward), but that wasn't going to bother a man from the Mirror. He was soon installed as night editor.

Turner was my obvious choice as a replacement when I quit the Daily Star in a fit of pique. Victor Matthews, Trafford's boss at the Express group, was determined that I should stay in Manchester looking after the fledgling Daily Star. I was equally determined to get back to my proper job as editor of the Daily Express. That was the end of my career, too.



Turner... battle scarred

with the usual lofty sentiments — "I'm not a tit and bum man," he claimed — and for a time he managed to sustain the paper's support for Labour that I had insisted upon. The honeymoon was soon over. Before long, like most of the others, the Daily Star was hailing Margaret Thatcher as the saviour of the nation. Victor Matthews's peerage was already in the post.

Even bingo failed the new editor. It was my secret weapon and proved the most successful circulation gimmick in history. Within 15 months, we were selling 1,250,000 copies a day. By the time Turner arrived in 1980, the Sun and the Mirror had got the message. Prize money went through the roof. It was a price the Express board would not pay. The Star's circulation has been sliding ever since.

As Lloyd Turner always said with a rueful laugh: it's tough at the top in tabloid newspapers.

Derek Jameson

Lloyd Turner, journalist, born October 2, 1938; died September 12, 1996

Birthdays

Sir Jeremy Child, actor, 52; David Cregan, playwright, 62; John Dankworth, bandleader, jazz musician, 67; John Whitehead, former ambassador to Japan, 64; Fred Winter, National Hunt trainer, 70.

Deaths Notices

Allen, On September 17th, suddenly, Steven of Chester, husband of Mrs. Frances S. Allen, 68. Family flowers, Donations for British Heart Foundation, 11, West Burton Road, Burton, Leics. LE19 1JG. (01509 27020)

In Memoriam

FREEDMAN, Alan M. In loving memory of a much beloved husband, father and brother. Sadly missed by his grieving family.

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Jackdaw



Rocked souls

"I WAS following the Lord wholeheartedly until we switched churches and I was invited to the new youth group. I had a conviction against rock music, but as I was surrounded by it, my beliefs were corrupted. This music eventually led to rebellion and moral failures. The Lord has gained victory in my life now, but the music still brings on rebellion if I listen to it. Please get rid of this music and play melodious, harmonious music." A Fifteen-Year-Old Student From Pennsylvania

young Christian. It made it easy for me to get into regular rock music. When I finally submitted to God and got the rock music out of my life, I was able to see the double standard that is lived out by 'Christian rock' musicians. 'Christian rock' does not praise God and it is worse than regular rock because I think it is hypocritical. Rock is wrong and addictive and has contributed to my moral failure. I praise God for His help in releasing me from it. An Eighteen-Year-Old Student From Indiana

"Christian rock" has hindered my life because the only difference between 'Christian rock' and secular rock is the words. The beat, rhythm, and the melody are not different; they are the same. It does not matter whether I listen to secular or 'Christian rock', when the songs are over, I feel the same. I feel an emptiness in my soul, a heavy burden. Even 'Christian rock' sometimes makes me feel like going out and getting rowdy or even hurting someone else if they provoke me, and that is against all of God's teachings, and everything God stands for. So get rid of all rock!!!! A Twenty-One-Year-Old Student From Michigan

Carriack Council's head of environmental health, John Hewitt, said the move followed a suggestion that water weapons discouraged cars and dogs and might also be effective on gulls. *Harmless games for the Cornish council.* Country Life

Bird control BERLIN has too many pigeons, so Karl Rademacher came up with the obvious answer: a birth control pill for female pigeons. Gerhard Engelmann of the Berlin health commission looked at the methods used by other cities before deciding to use Rademacher's pill. The pill, disguised as a kernel of corn, consists of plastic encased hormones coated in cornmeal. As pigeons don't have teeth, the pill is swallowed whole. Male pigeons are unaffected (they don't develop a high pitched coo) and if the females eat too many, they simply cough them up because their stomachs are so small. Rademacher estimates that the females will need to eat one pill every three

months to prevent them conceiving and expects his pill will cut Berlin's pigeon numbers by half. In the Kreuzberg area alone there are over 6000 pigeons. Known to the locals as "flying rats", every three months for a year, £17,000 worth of pills will be spread in Kreuzberg. *If the campaign fails, maybe they will try condoms. More birds getting battered.* reported in the New Scientist

Reagan and realise he's an impersonator. Oh my God, he's left me in a mental institution with all my baby stuff. So I go running outside and I see four rows of women naked from the waist down praying to Buddha. I go, "Excuse me, is there any way I can get a cab here?" And they go, "Well, the men's cabs to the right and the women's to the left and there's no cabs going to the left, so I think women can't get a cab today." So I go inside and there's Anna Nicole on an TV. I go, "Do you need me to break you out of here?" And she goes, "I can't, I'm a ward of the state." So I'm like, oh my God, I really am in a mental institution. I go outside again and I see this really tiny lego car coming towards me. I'm trying to open the door really carefully 'cause I don't want to break it, and I'm trying to get in and my stomach's too big. I look inside and there's Tommy in the front, and he goes "I'm going to break you out of here!" Ya know what, I didn't really want to find another girl that looks like you. I just wanted to go party with my friends for a while — come on, get in." And then I woke up. Pamela Anderson's dream, which she wanted to be printed as then people would know everything they needed to know about her. The Face

may be Paul. Yes, indeed, you can control a fully functional robotic hand. Provided that you believe that the only function for hands is waving. This high quality hand replica was made with the finest of posterboard. It is mounted on a hobby servo motor. You can select one of four different sizes of waves. Click here to start waving. Thank you for your wave. I've carefully observed the cats' reaction to the band. Master will stare at it when it moves, the other three cats, Callie, Mutant and Katrina, just ignore it. This hand is connected to the basic stamp on Paul's desk. Bored, then go back to Paul's Home Page. *Where you can either check the temperature of his fridge or his bath tub! Paul's Home Page is at www.ham.judo.com!* Jackdaw wants jewels. E-mail jackdaw@guardian.co.uk; fax 0171 713 4866; Jackdaw, The Guardian, 110 Farringham Road, London EC1R 3ER

Jackdaw

Rocked souls

Bird games

Bird control

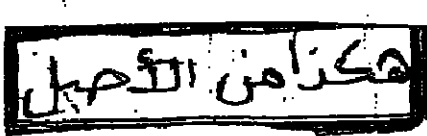
Pam's insight

Like a dream... The Face

Cat control

Emily Sheffield

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store
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Finance Guardian

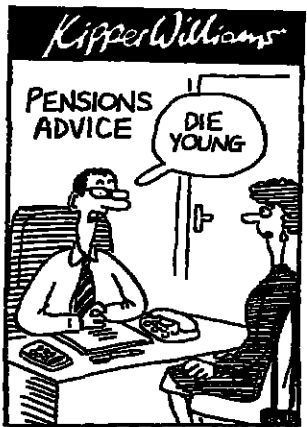
OFT acts on pension fiasco

'Rising unease' at sales methods

Richard Miles

THE OFFICE of Fair Trading instituted a far-reaching inquiry into personal pensions yesterday, as the industry continues to drag its heels over compensating people who were hoodwinked into leaving their company pension schemes.

contain a series of recommendations for ministers, financial regulators and the pensions industry on how



any mis-selling problems can be minimised.

John Bridgeman, director general of the OFT, said: "At a time when consumers are having to become more proactive in the way they provide for their retirement, there is also increasing unease about pensions products and the selling methods employed by the industry."

"We will be looking at the broader picture — at the innate weaknesses in the system which allowed mis-selling and at classes or types of pensions. We want to establish what happens at the point of sale and what influences consumer choice."

Two years into the review of mis-sold personal pensions, redress has been offered to only a handful of victims. Many are teachers, nurses, miners and other public sector workers who were persuaded by insurance salesmen not to join their employer's pension scheme.

Figures published in April by the Personal Investment Authority, the financial regu-

The 1.5m potential victims

More than five million people have a personal pension. However, two-thirds of policyholders make no contributions of their own, relying solely on rebates from the State Earnings-Related Pension Scheme (Serps).

More than 10 million people are members of company pension schemes, with the vast majority belonging to final salary schemes. They can expect to receive two-thirds of their final salary as a retirement income after 25 years of service.

Some 1.5 million people may have been wrongly advised to switch from a company pension scheme to a personal pension, despite the generally superior benefits and greater security of company schemes.

Sales of personal pensions dropped by around 20 per cent in 1995 after the débâcle was revealed.

later overseeing the review, show that only 58.7 million has so far been paid in compensation, to just 7,000 victims. The total compensation bill is estimated at £2 billion.

But the OFT said the timing of its inquiry should not be taken as a reflection of its dissatisfaction with the pace of the review, nor with the PIA and the chief regulator, the

Securities and Investments Board, despite widespread criticism of the way they have handled the débâcle.

OFT officials will also investigate design flaws in personal pensions which disadvantage the self-employed and women who take career breaks. They said the inquiry would also include comparisons with the pension indus-

tries of other countries. The TUC, which has campaigned vigorously on behalf of its members for speedier redress, welcomed the OFT's inquiry.

Pensions officer Joanne Segars said: "This has been one of the biggest financial scandals of all time. It would have been helpful if the OFT had done this some time ago."

John Denham, the Labour Party's spokesman on pensions, said: "We would welcome any initiative which would push forward the review. Up to this point, the Government has shown scant interest in the progress of the review and has not seemed to give it the priority it deserves."

But Standard Life, one of the biggest providers of personal pensions, expressed its concern. "If the OFT exercise clears the air, that's fine. But if it is something that says there are a lot of problems with the industry, I would feel very unhappy," said general manager (marketing) John Hylands.

Notebook

Maxwell's web remains tangled



Alex Brummer

MR JUSTICE Buckley's decision not to put Kevin Maxwell, his family and, as importantly, another jury through a second lengthy pension fraud trial does not draw a thick black line under the most colourful financial scandal of the 1990s. Instead, it reopens the long-running debate about the future of the Serious Fraud Office, the use of juries in complex fraud cases and the whole structure of regulation and justice in the City.

In such cases, the criminal insider trading cases are now virtually never brought, because the burden of proof is too high and the evidence regarded as too complex for juries, so the SFO has, in effect, become a body of high-profile prosecutions.

Moreover, while Pandora Maxwell was clearly able to convince Mr Justice Buckley, with some justification perhaps, that she and her family had been subjected to what the Americans might call cruel and unusual punishment, the public pillorying of the good Maxwell name is not over yet. While the wheels of justice have been slowly grinding along, other inquiries related to the Maxwell affair were put on hold: expect them now to spring back to life.

Of these, plainly the most important is the full-scale DTI inquiry into the hype surrounding the flotation of Mirror Group Newspapers in May 1991 — a last desperate attempt by the late swindler Robert Maxwell to keep his foundering empire afloat.

In this investigation findings by a hard-headed barrister and chartered accountants might well result in new efforts to bring prosecutions. In addition, the Commons Social Security committee intends to press ahead with its interrupted inquiry and there is the possibility that the younger Maxwells' new business careers — selling satellite television to the Russians — could be curtailed by DTI action to disqualify them as directors.

AS ALWAYS on these occasions, the SFO can be expected to take the flak. To a certain extent it should. Its conduct of the first case against the Maxwells was seen as universally as laudable. However, its decision to atomise the charges so as to spare the jurors the multiplicity of complex charges seen in the unsuccessful case against the Blue Arrow defendants — was viewed as sensible. The SFO's choice in coming forward with a second group of charges against Kevin Maxwell may have been aberrational, but was a choice left open by the decision to hold back in the first instance.

What is more worrying than George Staple and the SFO's pondering on, is the growth of a public opinion that the SFO is the most powerful body in the country.

Signet's attempt to offload jewellery chain falls apart

Pauline Springett

SIGNET, the debt-laden jewellery group which used to be known as Ratners, yesterday announced it had abandoned talks on the sale of its British chains H Samuel and Ernest Jones.

The announcement was made after the stock market had closed and simply said that a satisfactory agreement with the unnamed buyer — understood to be venture capitalist Apex Partners — had not been reached.

Signet and Apex have been thrashing out the deal for nine months. By May it seemed that a sale of the 600 shops for £280 million was all but completed. But it later emerged that the two sides could not agree over the terms of the shop leases.

James McAdam, Signet's chairman, confirmed that the

ing impression that it has been a success story was this more evident than in the case of the prosecution of Baring trader Nick Leeson, when the SFO was quite happy to sit on its hands and let the more summary justice system in Singapore do its stuff.

The current spin from the SFO, of which there was plenty as Mr Justice Buckley prepared to do his stuff, is that as prosecution authority it has done much better with the serious fraud than huge fraud cases. And this, unimagined to the public, was where successes have been.

THIS begs the question as to who will prosecute the serious fraud cases. The SFO has become less confident of the big City cases, of which there is still no shortage. One solution being floated by the SFO is higher quality juries, containing the likes of bank managers, accountants and business experts. That is fine except the panels of such people which existed before 1970 but were abolished, might not be that easy to find because of professional work commitments. This incidentally is a shift anyway for the SFO which has recently been going in public for the Roskill Commission proposals of a smaller panel of adjudicators sitting with a judge, rather than jury trial.

There is a great deal of interest in the City, particularly at the Stock Exchange which is responsible for much of the torying of share price movements, in building a stronger edifice of civil law — administered through an all-powerful Securities and Investments Board — which could provide more efficient summary justice and engage in the kind of plea bargaining which is characteristic of the US system of financial justice.

A greater emphasis would also be put on financial restitution which would mean that the assets and future earnings of those who plundered pension funds could be attached and sequestered to pay back victims. In the Maxwell case, it has never fully been determined what happened to the missing £400 million, which was not fully dissipated in propping up Maxwell commercial enterprises.

In some respects, it would have been unjust had Robert Maxwell's sons been forced to carry all the burden of their father's wrongdoings. As was disclosed in the first trial and since, he was a bully who was hard to resist. But where his sons may have found this difficult to deal with, City institutions have a duty to be more wary. That is why the outcome of the DTI inquiry is the more fascinating.

As well as looking at the antics of the Maxwells, we will be looking at the behaviour of those who sponsored the issue. The merchant bank Samuel Montagu (now swallowed up within the HSEC group) and Smith New Court were the main sponsors of the deal which preceded Robert Maxwell's death five years ago.

The DTI report offers the last best chance of genuinely understanding the mysterious and frenetic dealings which preceded Robert Maxwell's death five years ago.

Biggest store raises hue and cry

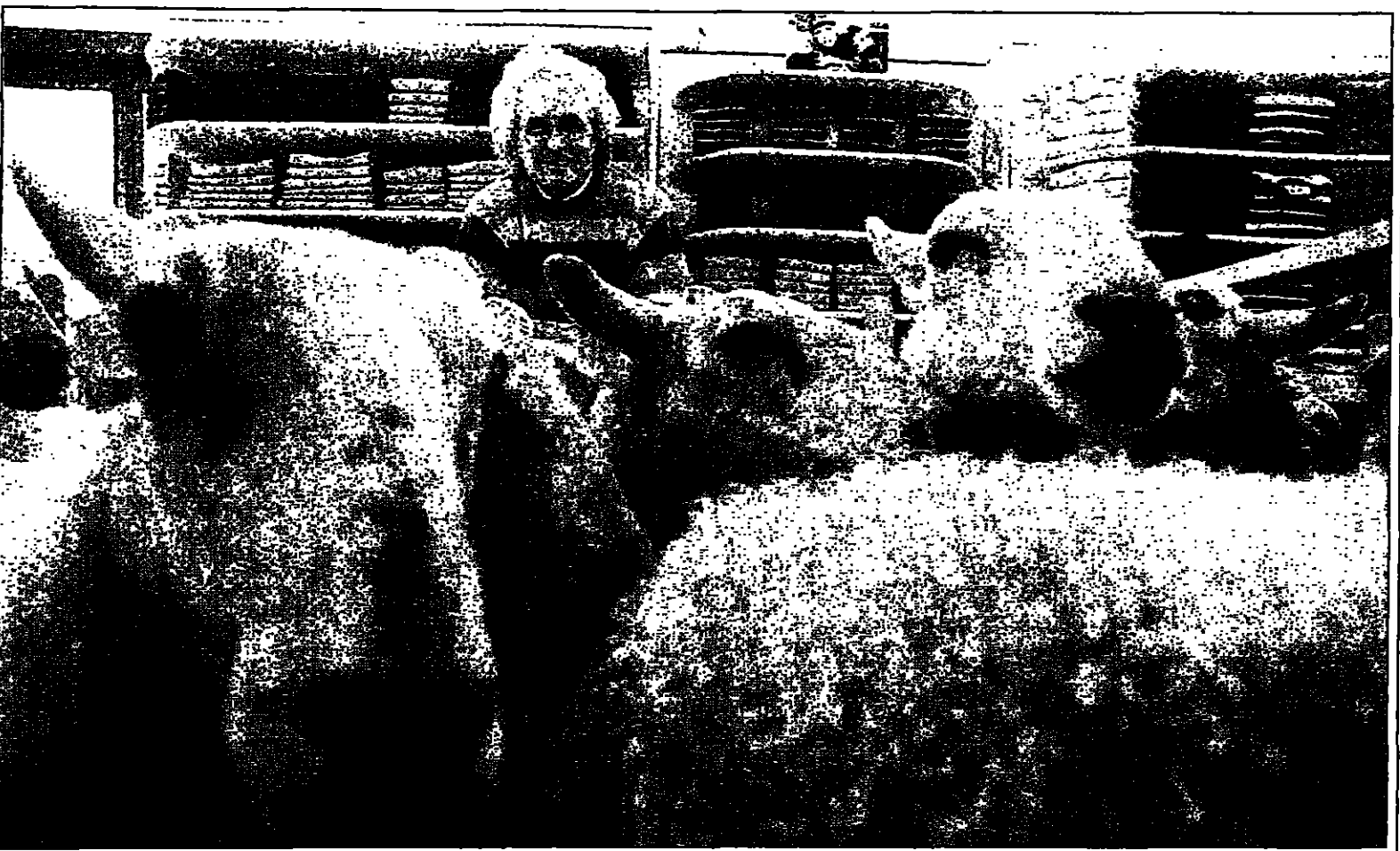
Pauline Springett sees guests flock to Benetton's new megastore

THE world's largest Benetton store was opened yesterday in London's Oxford Circus by company president Luciano Benetton, with help from a flock of multi-coloured sheep.

The opening ceremony, symbolic of Benetton's idiosyncratic and controversial advertising campaigns, involved Mr Benetton paying tribute to the sheep, which had arrived by taxi and an open-top Rolls Royce.

Speaking in Italian, he described the sheep — which had been coloured blue, green, yellow and blue with vegetable dye — as "very efficient suppliers who even work on Christmas Day". Benetton is the world's largest consumer of wool.

The Benetton megastore occupies a 17,000 sq ft site



To dye for... Luciano Benetton shepherds star attractions to the opening of his company's biggest store

PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN GOOWIN

on three floors. Another opens on New York's Fifth Avenue next month, highlighting a move towards larger stores — traditional Benetton outlets have been small, boutique shops.

The Oxford Circus store will be used to try out new lines, systems and fabrics. The shop will also have ex-

hibition space, plus DJs and live performances from bands. It will stock the full Benetton and Sisley ranges, children's wear from the Zerotonio and 012 ranges, and a new maternity line, Mamma di Benetton.

Mr Benetton said that, although the retail clothing market had recently been

slack, his 120 UK shops had shown a 20 per cent rise in sales.

Benetton, which was founded in 1965 by the eponymous family, has 7,000 shops in 120 countries. The Benetton group is now much more than a clothing company. The business includes For-

mula One racing, roadside restaurants, hypermarkets, property, merchant banking and sports goods.

The empire is controlled by Luciano, his brothers Gilberto and Carlo, and his sister Giuliana. Numerous Benetton children are also involved in running parts of the business.

The Benetton shops are not owned by the company. They operate on what some might describe as a franchising basis but Luciano prefers to call a licensing system.

Managers of the stores pay Benetton for its goods and then have free use of the company image.

Sumitomo's copper rigging bill up by 50pc

Paul Murphy

SUMITOMO Corporation, the Japanese conglomerate whose chief copper trader, Yasuo Hamanaka, rigged the world market in the metal for a decade, admitted yesterday that the bill for the débâcle has risen by almost half to \$2.6 billion (£1.7 billion).

The news — accompanied by a statement from Sumitomo saying it would press criminal charges against Mr Hamanaka — emerged with a revised earnings estimate from the Japanese group, which said it expected to show a loss of \$870 million this financial year, against profits of £140 million a year earlier.

Mr Hamanaka, who stands accused of propping up the price of copper through a string of unauthorised deals conducted through the London Metals Exchange, has evaded the attention of the world's media for the past three months.

Sumitomo said it now appears that a small "off the books" loss made by Mr Hamanaka in 1985 escalated more than 40-fold as the trader tried to win back losses with massive, secret trading. A 60-strong task force is said to be sifting through 2,000 boxes of documents.

But while Sumitomo's orig-

inal \$1.8 billion losses forecast in June has been treated as a wild under-estimate, a statement from the group yesterday indicating it has still not unwound all its trading positions in copper left the metals markets in a renewed state of flux. "We know Hamanaka had huge positions and there is a suspicion that these are still overhanging the market, even if they are now owned by someone else," one metals dealer said.

Mr Hamanaka mainly used a number of British broking houses to carry out his business — most notably Winchester Commodities, whose owners, Charles Vincent and Ashley Levett, made windfall profits from the Japanese trader's business. Winchester, which has stated that all its dealings were above board and properly reported to regulators, along with several other brokers, is the subject of a Serious Fraud Office inquiry, while the City's chief regulator, the Securities and Investments Board, is reviewing the LME as a whole.

Meanwhile, in the US a congressional hearing into the affair began this week.

David King, chief executive of the LME, has written to the House Banking Committee in Washington outlining his version of how and when the LME's investigation into Mr Hamanaka's activities progressed.

Societies win £100m tax victory

Teresa Hunter

THREE leading mortgage groups won a landmark victory yesterday in a 10-year tax battle with the Government which could trigger a £100 million-plus windfall for them.

The Halifax, on behalf of the Leeds Permanent, the Abbey National, for the National & Provincial, and the Yorkshire had appealed to the Commission of Human Rights after the Government blocked any legal action in British courts relating to a tax row dating back to 1986.

The Government now faces the embarrassment of a defeat

in the European Court of Human Rights, which typically backs the findings of the commission, and the prospect of a large bill for taxpayers. The court is not expected to hear the case until late next year.

The disagreement began when the Government switched from gathering savings tax under the composite rate system — which applied to all accounts and was the responsibility of the institutions — to taxing savers individually.

The Woolwich, Leeds Permanent, National & Provincial and Yorkshire were among a group of building societies which claimed that

they had been taxed twice because of a late year-end. They said the Revenue's transitional arrangements left them paying both composite rate tax and the new tax for several months of the first year.

The Woolwich, which suffered most, began judicial proceedings against the Government in 1986, thereby sparking a four-year legal battle which ended in a House of Lords defeat for the Government.

The Woolwich received a tax rebate of £100 million — triggering a spate of claims from other institutions.

These were immediately blocked by the 1991 Finance Act, which changed the law to

rule out further claims. The Leeds, now part of the Halifax, then launched a legal action against the Treasury. This was in turn stifled by the 1992 Finance Act, which outlawed all further proceedings in British courts.

A Halifax spokesman said: "Halifax chief executive Mike Blackburn, who was then at the head of the Leeds, felt that the Government was infringing the society's basic human rights by denying it a fair hearing in the courts."

"This view has now been upheld by the European Commission of Human Rights, which has supported our view that everyone is entitled to a fair and public hearing."

Hambros and Regent truce over

Hong Kong group threatens bank with break-up. Paul Murphy reports

REPORTS earlier this month of a truce between Hambros, one of London's few remaining independent merchant banks, and rebel shareholder Regent Finance appeared premature yesterday after the aggressive Hong Kong-based investment house said it had given Hambros a deadline of today to come up with restructuring proposals.

Regent, which is best known for launching break-up bids for investment trusts, revealed it had built a 3 per cent stake in Hambros last

month and immediately slammed the bank's performance as "diabolical" — a charge dismissed by Hambros's chief executive Sir Chips Keswick as "gratuitously rude".

Now Regent, which has just completed a restructuring of its own ownership, is threatening to muster the support of other Hambros shareholders to get the banking group broken up if it fails to realise shareholder value itself.

"We obviously don't have the means, certainly not at the moment, to buy the company and to dismember it, but

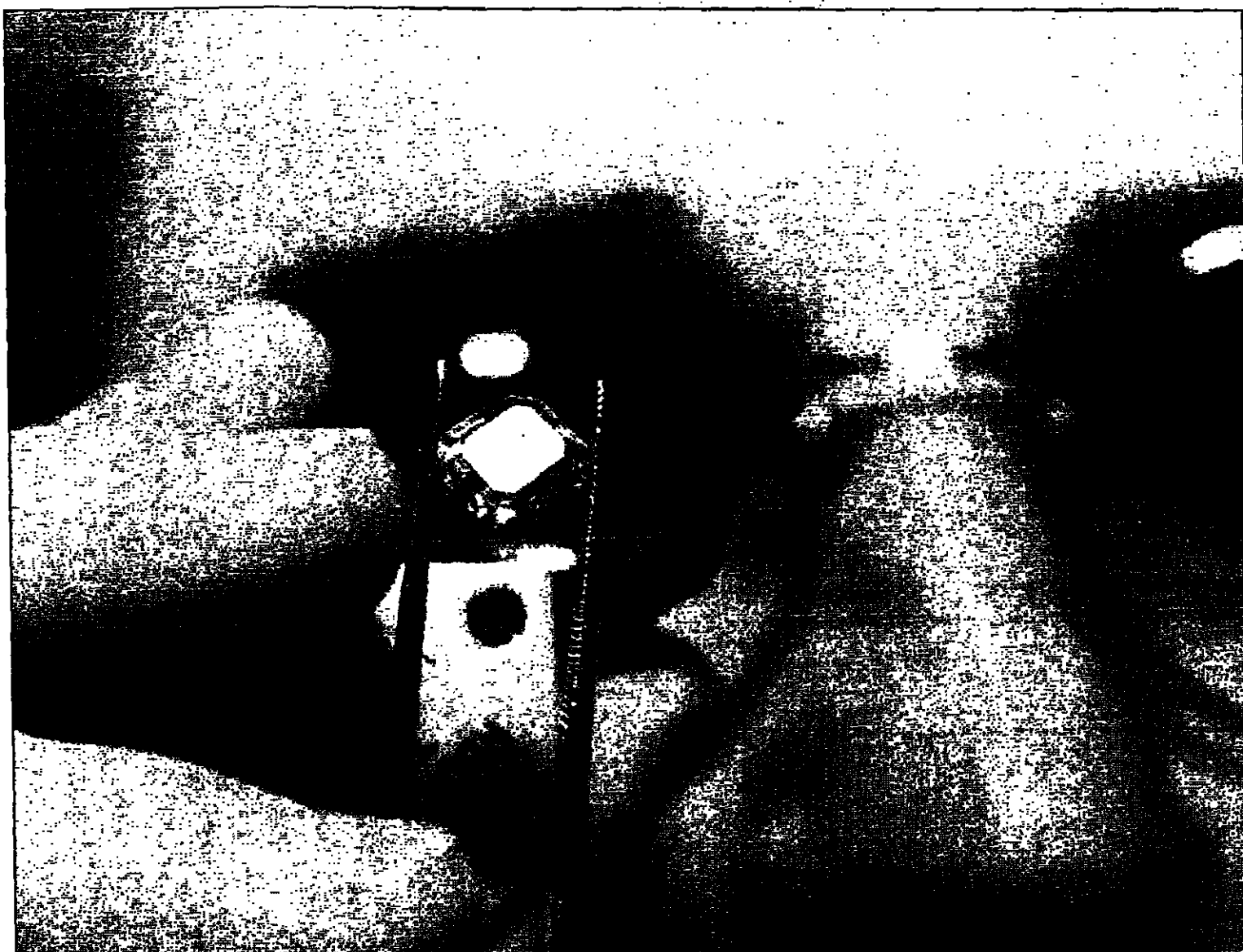
there are bits of Hambros that would demand a much higher price outside the current market," Sir Chips said.

Regent's managing director, said yesterday. Relations between the two parties appeared to have calmed following a meeting between Sir Chips and three Regent directors 10 days ago. But Regent now wants an "adequate" response to a letter, containing the September 20 deadline, which sets out its proposals. These are said to include a £500 million repayment of capital to shareholders, together with the sale of Hambros's 51 per cent stake in estate agency Hambro Countrywide and its 54 per cent holding in Hambro Insurance Services — possibly yielding another £200 million.

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 1,915.00	France 7.78	Italy 2,331	Singapore 2,145.00
Austria 16.07	Germany 2,265.00	Malta 0.5440	South Africa 6.80
Belgium 46.98	Greece 306.00	Netherlands 2,555.00	Spain 192.25
Canada 2,089.00	Hong Kong 11.76	New Zealand 2,197.00	Sweden 10.17
Cyprus 0.7010	India 55.70	Norway 6.8340	Switzerland 1.8710
Denmark 8.84	Ireland 0.9400	Portugal 234.00	Turkey 135.274
Finland 7.00	Israel 4.93	Saudi Arabia 5.82	USA 1,525.00

Supplied by NatWest Bank (excluding Indian rupee and Israeli sheqel).



BIDDERS for this rare 3.06-carat pink diamond, need old-fashioned cash, writes Dominic Walsh. Argyle Diamonds, which is showing a collection of 47 pink diamonds as part of its annual tender, said buyers had to settle in cash within four days of receiving their invoice. For this stone, that could mean up to \$1 million. PHOTOGRAPH: GRAHAM TURNER

Factories prices remain immune to shopping spree

Richard Thomas
Economics Correspondent

PRICES pressures at the factory gate have dipped to a three-year low despite a strong upturn in the housing market and on the high street, the CBI says today. With firms dipping into plentiful stockpiles to meet growing consumer demand, the employers' organisation said expectations of price increases over the summer were at their lowest level since the middle of 1993. Giving its latest snapshot of manufacturing activity, CBI executives welcomed evidence of subdued inflation, which provides further ammunition to Chancellor Kenneth Clarke in his battle with the Bank of England against higher interest rates. "The unchanged trend on price pressures... is likely to exert downward pressure on overall inflation," said associate director Sudhir Junankar.

latest leading figures provide the clearest indication that the housing market is returning to health.

City analysts said the property market recovery would be sustained until a spring election. Jonathan Loyne, at HSBC James Capel, said: "This is more robust news on the housing market. The next few months should see an increase in housing transactions."

The CBI says the reviving domestic economy — underpinned by rising property prices — is boosting domestic orders, offsetting a fall in overseas demand. More than a third of the 1,200 companies polled in August said output would rise over the last four months of the year, against 15 per cent expecting a fall in production.

Mr Junankar said the monthly Industrial Trends survey could mark the end of a long decline in the factory sector.

"The improvement in demand is encouraging, although manufacturers continue to be hampered by weak

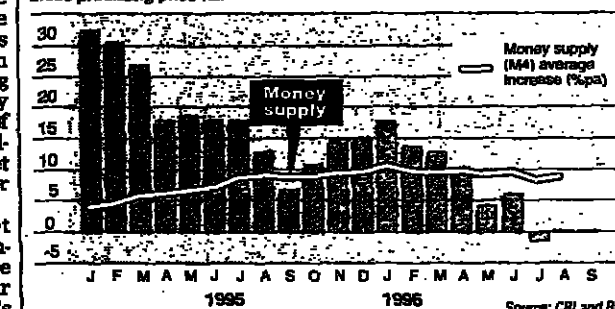
exports. With companies starting to make inroads in their stocks of unsold goods, the output increases predicted in this survey suggest that manufacturing industry is poised to recover."

The only cloud on the economic horizon yesterday was an increase in the Bank of England's broad measure of money supply, M4, which is seen by some economists as an early warning sign of inflation. The Bank said the stock of money in the economy — boosted by Abbey National's takeover of the N&P — rose at a rate of 9.4 per cent over the year to August, up from 9.1 per cent in July.

Although most economists said the data would not worry the Chancellor, some warned that the Bank of England not a cause for concern. But this will not stop the Bank of England highlighting the supposed inflationary threats."

Money and prices

Percentage balance between factories predicting increase in prices and those predicting price fall



EU seeks devaluation curb

Government faces storm over move to restrict sterling's room for manoeuvre. John Palmer reports

IN A move certain to infuriate Tory Eurosceptics, Britain will come under pressure this weekend from its European partners to rule out competitive devaluations of the pound when a hard core of countries adopt the single currency. Chancellor Kenneth Clarke will also be pressed by fellow finance ministers, meeting in Dublin, to agree that the UK's exchange rate policy is a matter of "common concern" to the EU as a whole — implying even closer consultation between Britain and its partners over economic policy. Finance ministers are expected to brush aside British doubts and warnings, and relaunch a reformed exchange rate mechanism taking the euro to other EU currencies outside monetary union (the "outs").

They are determined to keep EMU on track for its planned launch on January 1, 1999, by approving a "stability pact" binding countries to keep their budget deficits under long-term control after the moves to the single currency are complete. "This is a very important meeting for the credibility of the whole EMU operation. We are confident that there will be a political consensus among member states on all these issues," a European Commission official said yesterday. "Once we have the endorsement of the ministers for the stability pact and the new ERM, it will be for the heads of government to give their formal blessing to the whole package at the Dublin summit in December." Although all EU countries aiming to take part in the

single currency will be expected to join the new ERM, membership will not be mandatory.

This will remove any need for Britain to re-peg sterling inside the new ERM in the run-up to the 1998 decision about which countries qualify to take part in the move to a single currency.

The ministers will also be given a confidential paper by the European Monetary Institute, precursor to the proposed European Central Bank, setting out its ideas on how the new ERM should work and what exchange rate margins should apply between the euro and non-EMU currencies (the "ins" and "outs").

The EMI also wants the proposed European central bank to be given powers to trigger exchange rate adjustments where economic circumstances justify this.

Any country judged to be running a "persistent" and "excessive deficit" will face the prospect of being fined. The proposed pact falls far

short of the draconian sanctions originally demanded by Bonn. But it is considered sufficiently watertight for Germany to accept some degree of "flexibility" in applying the EMU treaty single-currency criteria in borderline cases.

The commission and most EU member states want any

This is a very important meeting for the credibility of the whole EMU operation. We are confident there will be a political consensus among member states on all these issues'

penalties to be imposed only after errant governments have been given nine months in which to come up with corrective economic measures. Germany is still pushing for a six-month period of grace but it will agree to governments with deficits of more than 3 per cent of GDP (rather than the 1 per cent it originally demanded) having to make non-interest-bearing deposits with the central bank.

The rate of fines would start at about 0.2 per cent of GDP but could rise thereafter according to the extent of any excessive deficit.

Although there will be a "presumption" that sanctions should be imposed where a country runs an excessive deficit, no action will be taken until the commission has made an assessment of all the circumstances.

For all the stress on the long-term disciplines in the stability pact, EMU governments will still have to decide what in each case amounts to an excessive and persistent deficit.

Concrete maker whistles in the gloom

RMC

Stock market value	£2.9bn
Share price	111p ▼ 42p
Workforce	30,000
Interest cover	6.7
PROFITABILITY	%
Sales	£2,114.9m -5.1
Pre-tax profit	£95.5m -28.5
Earnings/share	22.2p -28.6
Dividend/share	7.8p +4.7
Operating profit	£m
UK	38.8
Germany	35.1
Other European countries	25.0
Countries outside Europe	19.7

Half year
 1995
 1996

OUTLOOK/Pauline Springett on the construction famine hitting RMC's share price.

RMC tends to enjoy a good relationship with the City. It is the world's largest supplier of ready-mixed concrete — the origin of its name — plus a host of other building materials. Its products have a reputation for quality, and they are not prone to changes in fashion. Moreover, the company's management is respected and the balance sheet strong. Nevertheless, RMC currently is straining its relationship with the City to the limit — witness the sharp slump in the share price yesterday.

This was caused not so much by the half-year profits warning in May. The real trouble is that despite a valiant attempt by the management to appear optimistic, the next six months look distinctly flat.

RMC has been caught out by two main factors: bad weather in Europe and a building industry in Germany which has gone off the boil. Add contin-

ued uncertainty in the UK construction market, plus problematic markets elsewhere, and you have a distinctly gloomy outlook.

At the root of poor results for the first half was the severe winter in Europe — it was still snowing heavily in Austria, for instance, in early summer. When the sun finally shone, construction industries in the main countries where RMC operates failed to ignite.

Germany is RMC's biggest market, accounting for 35 per cent of sales. The company has steadily increased its German business in recent years, and certainly took advantage of the initial boost in construction after the Berlin wall was removed. But things have changed. A decline in the rate of German housebuilding, and lower cement imports into eastern Germany, are taking their toll. Cost-reduction measures have been initiated by the firm but have yet to take effect. Several hundred jobs have gone so far and more cuts are likely.

Peter Young, chief executive of RMC, acknowledged that Germany was "problematic", adding that although he believed the second half of 1996 would be better than the first, sales were likely to dip again next year. "I can't see it improving until 1998," he said.

In the UK — RMC's other main market — the outlook is more mixed. Mr Young, who must be one of life's optimists, said he believed the housing market was at last set to pick up, and that the ailing private finance initiative — designed to co-fund projects with the Government — "will actually happen".

The rest of Europe is also mixed. Mr Young complained that many European economies were being held back because their governments were trying to hit targets in preparation for the single currency. France in particular was badly affected. Mr Young said that while RMC's French division turned in "another dismal performance", things could not get much worse.

Conditions are not bad throughout Europe, however. RMC's businesses in Portugal, Spain and Ireland are all performing well, and although each is relatively small on its own, the small bits do add up. The US business is also picking up, thanks to a revitalised Californian construction industry. In the long term the plan is to reduce RMC's reliance on Germany and the UK. There will be further expansion in Europe and in the rest of the world. The Israeli business is buoyant, and the company has recently started an operation in Jordan. There are also plans to move into India — a country new to the delights of ready-mixed concrete. But the refocusing is unlikely to be achieved by large purchases. Instead, RMC is likely to keep faith with its traditional mix of organic growth plus small bolt-on acquisitions. That means it may take some years before Mr Young's optimism bears fruit — the City must be patient.

News Corp set for big profits rise — Murdoch

Lisa Buckingham

RUPERT Murdoch, chairman of News Corporation, has delivered a strongly upbeat profit forecast, predicting that the global media group will achieve a "very substantial" earnings increase in the current year.

He told shareholders that a 20 per cent budgeted profit increase for this year, which would lift profits to more than 1.5 billion Australian dollars (£761 million) before abnormal items — was realistic.

Ruge box office takings from Independence Day, the film made by the group's 20th Century Fox studios in Hollywood, combined with moderating paper prices and strong advertising demand for Fox Broadcasting in America, will be at the heart of the profits surge.

Mr Murdoch's forecast follows a 6 per cent fall in group profits before abnormal items to \$1.26 billion in the year to June, when results were hit by the disposal of HarperCollins Educational publishing as well as continuing losses at Star TV, the Asian satellite broadcaster.

His statement in the annual report indicates that the poor performances from films, magazines and Australian newspapers are turning around. Newspaper increases cost the group more than \$300 million dollars last time and its consumer book publishing business, HarperCollins, was hit by the collapse of the Net Book Agreement.

But Mr Murdoch now says: "A substantial budgeted profit increase for the full year currently appears very attainable." The News Corporation stock price rose 8 cents to \$26.65 after the announcement.

Jobs seesaw for BA and Morrisons

Sarah Whitebloom

SEVEN hundred and fifty jobs at British Airways' Heathrow operation looked set for the axe last night — 24 hours after the flag-carrying airline disclosed that 5,000 posts were to go over the next 18 months.

The news came as Morrisons, the Bradford-based supermarket chain, announced that it was to create 3,200 new jobs by opening four new superstores.

BA's plans became clear yesterday as it announced the closure of a loss-making handling unit — which provides ticketing, check-in, cargo, loading, ramp-handling and lost baggage for 25 other airlines at Heathrow terminals two and three.

The "world's favourite airline" expects to be able to redeploy or retrain the majority of the 750 staff, although redundancy was not being ruled out.

BA's sweeping programme

of cost cuts announced on Wednesday is designed to save £1 billion over the next three years. The chief executive, Bob Ayling, said yesterday: "We have examined at length both the opportunities to increase prices to our customers and to reduce our costs of the operation, but have reluctantly concluded that it is impossible at current pay rates."

Meanwhile, Morrisons surprised the City as it unveiled an 8 per cent profits increase and the opening of four new superstores in some of the country's unemployment blackspots.

Morrisons, formed in 1899 but relatively unknown in the South, disclosed that it had 2.25 million customers a week going through its stores — contributing to pre-tax profits of \$53.2 million for the first half of this year.

A spokeswoman said the new stores would be at Cheshire Heath in Greater Manchester, Sunderland, Northampton and Sheffield.

News in brief

'Pressured' BICC in £170m cash call

BICC, the cables and construction company, yesterday made a £170 million cash call in response to "terrific pressure" from its cable businesses for investment capital. Alan Jones, BICC's newly appointed chief executive, said the firm's optical fibre and communication cables businesses had put management under pressure to "find money for growth". BICC announced its rights issue at 270p per share along with £200 million investment plans which involve putting £140 million into optical fibres, optical cables and Brand-Rex data communications cables. The firm also said it would use £40 million of money raised and interest-free funds in its Asia-Pacific operations. A further £35 million is earmarked for private finance infrastructure projects in the UK. — Sarah Whitebloom

Lottery squeezes Brent

THE battered Brent Walker leisure group yesterday said its betting business was still suffering because of the impact of the National Lottery and Instant scratch cards. The company, which was reporting a pre-tax loss of £51.6 million for the first half of the year, compared with a loss last year of £31.4 million, said that turnover in its William Hill betting shops continued to be dented by competition from the lottery. Chairman Brian Goswell said it would continue to lobby for further deregulation of the gambling industry. — Pauline Springett

Glaxo Wellcome shake-up

GLAXO Wellcome yesterday signalled the growing importance of emerging economies with a reorganisation which creates five business regions. The drugs company said the shake-up stemmed from a strategic review following the takeover of Wellcome last year, and was intended to boost regional decision-making. "The essential purpose is to capitalise on the diversity of business opportunities around the world," said Sir Richard Sykes, chief executive. — Roger Cowe

Pizza buy-out deal

PIZZAEXPRESS, the fast-growing restaurant operator, will next month announce a deal to buy out the majority of its franchisees for more than £20 million. The chain, which yesterday announced a 54 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £10.2 million for the year to July, is understood to have agreed terms with a group of about 30 of its remaining 35 franchised stores, a move welcomed by analysts as earnings-enhancing. — Dominic Walsh

Workers rally against anti-PVC campaign

Roger Cowe

ALMOST 5,000 chemical industry workers joined a demonstration in Dusseldorf yesterday to support PVC against growing environmentalist criticism of the chlorine-based plastic.

Delegations from across Europe at the rally, organised by the chemical industry union, IG Chemie, and AgPU, the PVC industry campaign, heard North Rhine Westphalia economic minister, Wolfgang Clement, via satellite link, say there was no reason to avoid using PVC.

Industry representatives

said 100,000 jobs were at risk in the German PVC industry as a result of PVC substitution. Greenpeace argues that new jobs could be created by using PVC-free materials.

Speakers burst balloons representing what they described as five lies about the plastic. Greenpeace claims manufacturing chlorine endangers the environment because of its heavy energy use and the threat from toxic chemicals such as mercury used in production.

It says the phthalates used to make PVC flexible, which were discovered in baby milk this year, are responsible for reproductive disorders. Controversy has also grown since

the Dusseldorf airport fire in April which killed 17 people. PVC cable coating was widely blamed for toxic smoke, and the plastic has been banned in public places by some German local authorities.

The industry says PVC was not an important factor and will be exacerbated in the final report into the fire.

British chemical group ICI is heavily involved in the chlorine industry, though it has sold its PVC business.

DIY store B&Q and retailers such as Boots and Sainsbury are examining the case for alternatives. Allan Knight, B&Q environment manager, said the case for banning PVC was not proved.

"Both sides are wrong, I'm waiting for pragmatism to emerge."

Philip Law, spokesman for the British Plastics Federation, said last night: "Any burning produces toxic smoke. The removal of PVC from construction materials would make hardly any change to that. There are no health, safety or environmental reasons to abandon PVC."

Greenpeace toxics campaigner Benny Haertlin said: "It's PVC that turns a fire into a chemical accident. Chemical workers would do better to demonstrate for long-term job security through the use of chlorine-free plastics."

The five big 'lies'

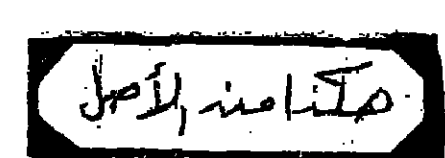
It is highly flammable and aggravated the airport blaze. Industry says: it is one of the most difficult materials to burn. Greenpeace says: it causes toxic smoke.

Production requires excessive amounts of energy. Industry says: it has a better energy balance than other materials. Greenpeace says: not across the whole lifecycle.

PVC is not recycled. Industry says: 70 per cent is recyclable. Greenpeace says: in Germany only 15 per cent will be by 2005.

It is toxic. Industry says: dioxins from burning PVC no more harmful than from a cigarette or barbecue. Greenpeace says: dioxins come from chlorinated compounds.

It is expensive. Industry says: replacing PVC would cost a fortune. Greenpeace says: the cost of cleaning up is enormous.



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Racing

Miss Stamper can complete nap hand

Ken Oliver

WHEN it comes to transforming a bargain buy into a valuable racing machine Richard Hannon has few equals and the Marlborough trainer has worked the cradle this season with Miss Stamper, who cost a mere 7,500 guineas.

This afternoon at Ayr, Miss Stamper bids to add the £18,000 first prize of the Shadwell Stud Fifth of Clyde Stakes to her tally, which stands at more than £150,000 — not bad for a filly whose winning streak began in a mere auction maiden stakes at Chepstow in June.

Further victories against better opposition followed at Newbury and Newmarket, but the icing on the cake was at the Curragh 20 days ago when she stormed home by three lengths in the valuable Tattersalls Breeders' Stakes.

To enhance her breeding value, Hannon has chosen this filly's listed race, the Miss Stamper (3.35) looks set to complete the nap hand.

Following a filly in form at this time of the year is a profitable play, but many burnt their fingers at Doncaster last Saturday when Ninia, backed down to 7-2 favourite in a field of 17 handicappers, trailed in twelfth.

But her final position tells nothing of her performance. Her jockey, Richard Hills, got in all sorts of trouble and I feel certain he will not repeat the ride as one of his best. Before that debacle Ninia had chalked up a hat-trick and, though carrying a 5lb penalty for her latest success, still looks on an attractive mark.

Mark Johnston, her trainer, has brought her back to one mile in the Ladbrokes Ayrshire Handicap after wins over 10 furlongs (twice) and nine furlongs.

Johnston feels that a mile is the ideal trip for Ninia (4.10), who was also entered for the mile and a quarter 2.35 race, and if there is any justice, those who lost their cash last week should certainly be repaid this afternoon.

At Newbury, Joe Naughton's Ever Golf Rose (2.40) can regain winning form in the Tony Stratton Smith Memorial Conditions Stakes.

This five-year-old mare has yet to find her form that notched eight wins last year, including the Prix de l'Abbaye at Longchamp in October. However, she has run some fine races and Naughton is using this as a prep race for another tilt at the Abbaye next month.

The Horse Racing Betting Levy Board has approved a £1 million interest-free loan to



Hannon... eye for bargain

United Racecourses towards a £3.1 million building project for Kempton Park.

Plans for the course centre on the remodeling of the grandstand and the repositioning of the parade ring to a new site behind the grandstand.

It is intended that the project will be completed between the Boxing Day meeting of 1997 and the start of December 1997. During this time the fixtures in January, February and December will be unaffected. Between March 29 and August 19 six meetings will be held with reduced facilities, while four fixtures, from June 10 to August 19, will be transferred.

Brave ends lean spell

SCOTTISH stables ended a losing spell stretching back more than a decade at the country's most prestigious flat fixture when Brave Montgomerie emerged triumphant at Ayr's Western Meeting yesterday.

Linda Ferratt, who has trained for five years at Cree Lodge, just stone's throw from the track, was the woman responsible for restoring national pride.

"I reckon this is Scotland's first winner at this meeting for 12 years and I'm absolutely delighted to have done it," said the 32-year-old blonde.

Like all of Miss Ferratt's string, Brave Montgomerie is galloped on the race track, and he capitalised on home advantage when finding a powerful late run to overhail Canadian Fantasy in the Holiday In Ayrshire & Arran Maiden Stakes.

The colt is owned by construction company boss Colin McLaren, whose colours will be carried tomorrow by Don't Care in the Ladbrokes Ayr Gold Cup.

Don't Care will be running for Miss Ferratt for the first time, having previously been trained in Ireland by Jim Bolger.

Newbury with form for the televised events

Table with 2 columns: Race Name, Time. Includes 2.10 Interference, 2.40 Newmarket, 3.10 Mashfield, 3.40 Newmarket, 4.15 Doncaster, 4.45 Young Duke, 5.15 Mashfield, 5.45 Corporal King.

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Table with 2 columns: Race Name, Time. Includes 4.45 Victor Chandler Handicap, 5.15 Newmarket, 5.45 Doncaster, 6.15 Doncaster, 6.45 Doncaster, 7.15 Doncaster, 7.45 Doncaster, 8.15 Doncaster, 8.45 Doncaster, 9.15 Doncaster, 9.45 Doncaster, 10.15 Doncaster, 10.45 Doncaster, 11.15 Doncaster, 11.45 Doncaster, 12.15 Doncaster, 12.45 Doncaster, 1.15 Doncaster, 1.45 Doncaster, 2.15 Doncaster, 2.45 Doncaster, 3.15 Doncaster, 3.45 Doncaster, 4.15 Doncaster, 4.45 Doncaster, 5.15 Doncaster, 5.45 Doncaster, 6.15 Doncaster, 6.45 Doncaster, 7.15 Doncaster, 7.45 Doncaster, 8.15 Doncaster, 8.45 Doncaster, 9.15 Doncaster, 9.45 Doncaster, 10.15 Doncaster, 10.45 Doncaster, 11.15 Doncaster, 11.45 Doncaster, 12.15 Doncaster, 12.45 Doncaster, 1.15 Doncaster, 1.45 Doncaster, 2.15 Doncaster, 2.45 Doncaster, 3.15 Doncaster, 3.45 Doncaster, 4.15 Doncaster, 4.45 Doncaster, 5.15 Doncaster, 5.45 Doncaster, 6.15 Doncaster, 6.45 Doncaster, 7.15 Doncaster, 7.45 Doncaster, 8.15 Doncaster, 8.45 Doncaster, 9.15 Doncaster, 9.45 Doncaster, 10.15 Doncaster, 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Cricket

County Championship: Leicestershire v Middlesex

Running Fox stands on verge of title

Mike Selvey at Grace Road

IT IS typical of cricket that when its premier competition comes to a climax the weather interferes. The Running Fox will not be quibbling, however, for while Surrey kicked their heels at the Oval when Kent came home...

Amid some faulty techniques and unmemorable moments, Leicestershire played so well for more than three hours to make 71. After a torrid winter in which he failed to establish himself in the England side, his international career appears to be on hold: a pity because there are few more talented batsmen around. Perhaps he will return.

This was a determined, skilful effort that included 10 boundaries and two sixes, both the product of an eagle eye and razor instinct and clumped off the front foot miles over midwicket.

Bad light permitted no play in the final session, but by then the Leicestershire pace attack had taken advantage of a green-tinted pitch to have Middlesex 88 for six at lunch and all out for 190 to gain maximum bowling points.

Then, as the light began to close in before tea, they reduced the deficit by 36 for the loss of Vince Wells.

Two further bonus points with the bat would be sufficient to see off Kent's challenge, and then it would be down to Surrey and themselves. Already the champagne can go on ice.

Middlesex made a poor list of things after Mike Gatting won the toss and decided to bat first. All his batsmen, with the exception of Mark Ramprakash, took a trio at the top, including a shell to get rid of Tufnell, and Simmons, despite an ankle injury that kept him off the field for a while, plunged to his right at first slip to take one-handed the chance to remove Keith Brown. Simmons is renowned as a catcher of swallows, but this was as good as they come.

Only a couple of times did he appear in trouble. When 26, he edged Parsons, busting a gut into a sturdy headwind, towards slip on for the wicketkeeper Paul Nixon to dive and push it away. On 67, he top-edged the same bowler over the keeper as he tried to hook a bouncer. This time relief was shortlived: next ball he drove a straight-forward return catch.

With the exception of Nixon's exuberance all the bowlers were backed by the sort of high-class close catching that has been a feature of Leicestershire's success this season. Wells took a trio at the top, including a shell to get rid of Tufnell, and Simmons, despite an ankle injury that kept him off the field for a while, plunged to his right at first slip to take one-handed the chance to remove Keith Brown. Simmons is renowned as a catcher of swallows, but this was as good as they come.



Following suit... umpires Leadbeater and Willey imitate the Leicestershire huddle as another Middlesex wicket falls

PHOTOGRAPH: ROSS HINNAIRD

Gloucestershire v Kent

Inspired Walsh puts Kent in cold sweat

Paul Weaver at Bristol

THIS was one of those charcoal-grey, bitterly cold days when one half-expects the new ball to be shared by Vincent Price and Peter Cushing. There was also a hint of the funeral about Kent's title hopes.

They were bowled out for 154 in only 59.1 overs, so failing to win a single batting point, and their head-hanging batsmen returned to the pavilion in such swift succession that they might have been mistaken for a cortege.

It is not yet all over for Kent, though. They started the day 15 points behind the leaders but if they now win after taking a maximum four bowling points, which is quite possible on this indifferent pitch, and get a lot of help from Middlesex at Grace Road, they could still pip Leicestershire by a single point. But they probably have a better chance of winning the National Trophy.

Courtney Walsh was again Gloucestershire's most successful bowler with four for 50, which means he is the country's leading wicket-taker with 81. Little wonder he has been offered a new two-year contract.

Kent won the toss and may regret their decision to bat. The pitch is very slow and of uneven bounce: low and very low. Trevor Ward, however, showed that runs were available to the determined. He scored 86 in 3½ hours before top-edging a pull against Mark Alleyne. He might have been out to the previous delivery when he pulled a short one to deep square leg; Andrew Symonds parried the ball as he stepped back over the rope and then came forward again to complete the catch, but Ward was given out under Law 32(a) which says a fielder must remain on the field at all times while taking a catch.

Batting looked difficult for Kent from the moment Matthew Walker was caught at slip and then Steve Marsh and Min Patel were caught behind in the space of four Walsh deliveries.

Surrey's coach Dave Gilbert took The Oval's ground-staff to task between the showers yesterday, complaining that they had not adequately covered part of the square. That he said, might have stopped play getting under way even if the rains had not returned at 2.30pm.

Derbyshire were in no mood to offer the bottom club Durham any late-season sympathy. Phil DeFreitas took decisive toll with five for 60 and, with Andrew Harris chipping in with three, Durham survived only 45.1 overs for 142 runs. Chris Adams then proceeded to demonstrate how easy batting can be by six runs with eight first-innings wickets standing.

Derbyshire (4pts) trail Durham (0) by six runs with eight first-innings wickets standing.

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Essex have eyes on second-best

WITH the championship title moving inexorably Leicestershire's way, the £30,000 cheque for second place has become the target of potential, if only partial, compensation for their rivals.

Fourth-placed Essex certainly have their eyes on the money and, with their visitors Glamorgan, dodged the showers at Chelmsford where Graham Gooch (62) and Nasser Hussain (60) combined manfully as they took the home side to 148 for one before the weather finally won shortly after tea.

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The Hampshire opener Jason Loney also had a good day: he scored an unbeaten 76 against Nottinghamshire and was awarded his county cap. With Giles White (73) he posted only Hampshire's second century opening stand of the summer at 147.

Sussex were humbled for 141 at Hove by Somerset, for whom the reputedly unsettled Andy Caddick weighed in with five for 58.

Sussex were humbled for 141 at Hove by Somerset, for whom the reputedly unsettled Andy Caddick weighed in with five for 58.

Scoreboard

Britannic Assurance County Championship (Today 10.30)

Table showing match details for Gloucestershire v Glamorgan, including scores, wickets, and extras.

Table showing match details for Gloucestershire v Kent, including scores, wickets, and extras.

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Scoreboard

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE v YORKSHIRE

Table showing match details for Northamptonshire v Yorkshire, including scores, wickets, and extras.

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Scoreboard

DERBYSHIRE v DURHAM

Table showing match details for Derbyshire v Durham, including scores, wickets, and extras.

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Advertisement for Beagle insurance featuring a large image of a dog and the text 'On Insure with Beagle and get a free 24 hour legal helpline. Interested? Call 0800 333 800 for a quote or for a home quote.' Includes a phone number and a small logo at the bottom.

Rugby Union Wales caught in the crossfire

Robert Armstrong

AUSTRALIA yesterday threatened to scrap their scheduled international against Wales at Cardiff Arms Park on December 1 if they are not given an autumn date against England.

The Australian RFU chief executive, John O'Neill, the Australian RFU's seemingly interminable saga of strife: a fresh twist by its effect holding the home unions' tours committee to ransom.

Australia would prefer to play England at Twickenham on November 2 or 16, having failed to persuade the tours committee to allow the match on December 7 in place of the Wallabies' scheduled game against the Barbarians.

The threat to the Wales match has been issued largely because Ray Williams, the Welsh chairman of the tours committee, recently insisted: "It is not possible to change the international calendar at such short notice."

Australia have already cancelled one game in order to play Wales on December 1, a Sunday. It is conceivable that the latest threat is merely a bluff aimed at forcing Williams to come up with the date for an England Test. However, the Welsh Rugby Union, which needs abundant revenue from all sources to help fund the £108 million rebuilding of the Arms Park for the 1999 World Cup, will be reluctant to test Australia's determination in the matter.

Setting aside the potentially embarrassing question of whether the RFU will have the England squad under contract by November and will be in a position to put out a first-choice team, England are desperately keen to play a Twickenham Test against Australia after the five-year gap since they lost 22-7 in the 1991 World Cup final.

Meanwhile Peter Wheeler, the Leicester chief executive, has boosted England's training plans, declaring that members of the national squad should attend near Wednesday's session at Bisham Abbey. Leicester have seven players in the current 40-man squad.

Alex Evans has turned down the chance to return to the Arms Park as Cardiff's director of coaching. Evans, Australia's 57-year-old national director of coaching, guided Cardiff to a Wales Cup triumph in 1994 and the First Division championship the following season.

Cricket News and Scores

0891 22 88 +

Table with columns for Counties update, listing counties and their respective scores.

Complete county scores. 0891 22 88 30. CALLS COST 30p PER MINUTE. 0891 22 88 30. 0891 22 88 30. 0891 22 88 30.

Vertical advertisement on the right edge of the page for 'David Davies the big asset' and 'Fast track Super League'.

Handwritten text at the bottom center: 'مركزنا للتعليم' (Our center for education).

Golf

Davies example the big Solheim asset for Europe

David Davies sees his namesake Laura as the scourge of the US at St Pierre

GOLFING history could be made at the St Pierre course near Choptouk over the next three days. If Europe beat the United States and regain the Solheim Cup, it will mark the first time that teams from this side of the Atlantic have simultaneously held all four of the trophies contested with the US.

captain Mickey Walker openly admits that the American tour is stronger in depth than the European, such acquiescence is hard to follow. The Americans have got what they wanted and now it is up to the European players to get their officials out of the hole they have dug for themselves.

But the Americans do not have Laura Davies, a player who supplies the sort of inspiration Severiano Ballesteros did in the Ryder Cup and Gordon Sherry in the Walker Cup and Janice Moodie in the Curtis Cup. All have been focal points for their teams, able by force of personality to convince other players that the impossible does not exist.

Faldo enjoys designer's perks to dog the tearaway Spence

Patrick Glenn at Loch Lomond

JAMIE SPENCE must have gone to bed last night feeling the slightly sweaty uncertainty of a fugitive. One step ahead of the chasing pack in the inaugural Loch Lomond World Invitational, the 33-year-old Kentish man knows that the most formidable figure in the posse is Nick Faldo.

former Open champion who has constructed a breathtakingly beautiful test, was one of Faldo's partners and said the Englishman had played "a perfect round of golf, tailored exactly to suit the surroundings". Faldo's only imperfection was the bogey five on the 14th, retrieved at the next hole, after three birdies on the outward nine.



Scottish office... Kenny Dalglish joins the book club yesterday

Soccer Daiglish edits the big issue

David Lacey on the grumbling appendix at the launch of the Scot's autobiography

OUTSIDE, in a rain-swept Haymarket, the homeless were selling the Big Issue. Inside a London restaurant a recent addition to the army of jobless, and owner of a rather nice house in Southport, was promoting an even bigger issue.

Kenny Dalglish, late of Celtic, Liverpool and Blackburn Fovers, launched his autobiography yesterday four weeks after ceasing to be the director of football at Ewood Park, a denouement which provides the 276-page book with a grumbling appendix.

Yesterday Dalglish kept faith with his recent colleagues. "Blackburn's present position doesn't give me any satisfaction," he insisted. "There was only disappointment about the way they went about terminating our agreement. That gives me no reason for any animosity towards the club." "Blackburn have got ability and a lot of good players. They're too good to be in the position they're in. Certainly they're good enough to get out of it. Ray is good enough to get them out of it, and they've still got financial backing from Jack Walker."

Blackburn target Euro 96 hero Bierhoff at £5m

BLACKBURN Rovers are hoping to fill the gap that Alan Shearer left by signing the German international Oliver Bierhoff, writes Mark Redding.

Blackburn made on the sale of Shearer to Newcastle. The Lancashire side have hit the target only five times in the league this season. Bierhoff, 28, is an experienced goalscorer now with his sixth club and made the headlines in England when he came on as a substitute and scored twice in Germany's 2-1 victory over the Czech Republic in the final of Euro 96.

"Who knows, it might be the start of a new career." Chelsea has signed Norway's international goalkeeper Frode Grodas on loan from Lillestrøm until the end of the year. Grodas, 31, is needed as cover after the Russian Dmitri Khariin injured his knee.

No Rush again for Wales

Martin Thorpe IAN RUSH'S Wales career looks finally over after the 34-year-old Leeds striker was omitted from the squad for the World Cup qualifier against Holland in Cardiff on October 5.

have been invaluable in such an important match. But the rift seems irreparable, with Gould admitting he had not even contacted Rush about his omission. Gould again prefers Arsenal's John Hartson up front and is likely to call on Everton's Gary Speed to cover Gigg's absence.

Rugby League

Fast track for Super League

Paul Fitzpatrick

CHRIS CAISLEY insisted a number of times yesterday that this is no breakaway. Even so, Rugby League (Europe) still sounds a lot like it. This is the organisation — in the image of soccer's Premier League — that is now responsible for the running and promotion of the 12 Super League clubs and whose aims were outlined by Caisley, the Bradford Bulls chairman, at Salford yesterday.

successful that News Corporation will be eager to sign a bigger and better new contract. "At a time when rugby union is in complete disarray, when they are running about like headless chickens signing everybody under the sun and spending vast fortunes they will never recoup, we believe this organisation presents us with the best opportunity for taking the game forward," he added. "I want the game to expand, but not at all costs. We want to make rugby league so attractive that people will want to buy into us. We will make things happen."

Motor Racing

I'll go to the limit, warns Hill

Alan Henry at Estoril

DAMON HILL, who will clinch the world championship here on Sunday if Jacques Villeneuve fails to finish ahead of him in the Portuguese Grand Prix, yesterday warned his Williams team-mate that if necessary he will drive to the very limit to take the title.

in the past in ways that I regard as unsatisfactory and I don't want it to happen this time. But if I am in the lead I will defend my position vigorously. There is no question about it. My situation is quite simple: I have to finish ahead of Jacques to finish the whole thing off. "I do not want to resort to unfair tactics. It's always a matter of opinion as to what is fair and what is not. I drive the way I feel fit at any given time and I'm at liberty to drive in a way which may not be the way that people expect me to drive. I have everything at my disposal. I don't always have to give way."

and not have to see another driver for the entire race. We will have to wait and see." Hill leads Villeneuve by 13 points going into this penultimate race of the season. To finish second behind the Canadian driver on Sunday would leave him one point short of the championship, but Villeneuve could claim it only by winning next month's Japanese GP and with Hill failing to score a single point in that race.

Tennis

Henman leads hunt for group one security

Stephen Bierley

IF NOSTALGIA is the nostalgia of the emotions then SW19 is set for three days of pain as Wimbledon's No. 1 court, that most quirky of tennis stages, makes its competitive bow this weekend.

Richard concert) is real and the forecast not encouraging. Lloyd is looking for a quick kill and has his strongest team. When Britain beat Slovenia 4-1 in Newcastle this year Henman was ill, and in July Greg Rusedski was injured for the visit to Ghana. "To win 5-0 in Acra was a much better result than some gave us credit for. I wouldn't have predicted it," said Lloyd, who as a former Davis Cup player himself is all too aware of the pitfalls and pitfalls of team tennis.

to Sweden's Mikael Tillström. "Tanner is very solid from the baseline and can serve well at times," said Henman. Playing on grass is clearly in Britain's favour, although No. 1 court is bound to be on the slow side given the current damp conditions. Henman, the world No. 33, plays Amir Ghanem, ranked some 500 places below him, in today's second singles.

Results

Soccer

SCOTTISH COCA-COLA CUP DRAW: Semi-finals: Dunfermline v Rangers; Hearts v Dundee.

Rugby Union

LOCH LOMOND INVITATIONAL TOURNAMENT: First round scores (GBR v SCO): 10-10.

Golf

LOCH LOMOND INVITATIONAL TOURNAMENT: First round scores (GBR v SCO): 10-10.

Tennis

USTA AUTUMN SATELLITE CIRCUIT: Open men's singles (GB v USA): 6-3.

Chess

2000 OLYMPIAD (Erwin) Round One: Indonesia 3, England 35 (Adams 1, Speelman 1, Sadler 1, Conquest 1).

Sport in brief

Cycling

Alex Zülle increased his lead on the Tour of Spain's first 117-mile 12th stage as Aldo del Naranjo won by Italy's Daniele Dario.

Motor Racing

Murray Walker has been approached by ITV to switch channels when it takes over the coverage of Formula One from the BBC next season.

Ice Hockey

Manchester Storm will add the Kingston Hawks trio Oleg Slinkov, Danilus Bauba and John Haig to their squad for next Tuesday's opening European League game at home to TPS Turku of Finland.

Chess

England share sixth place, half a point behind the top-seeded Russians, after three rounds of the 121-nation Olympiad in Armenia.

Soccer

Diego Maradona, fresh from his rehabilitation in a Swiss clinic, went on the rampage in a hotel lobby in Alicante, Spain, at five o'clock yesterday morning, breaking a table and turning over chairs.

Advertisement for the Saturday 28th-Sunday 29th September Festival at Ascot, Ascot Racecourse, Ascot, Berks. Includes a 'Cricket' logo and 'BOOK TICKETS NOW' text.

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SportsGuardian

AMERICANS HOLD ALL THE ACES EXCEPT ONE AS SOLHEIM CUP STARTS TODAY



Tell Laura we love her... Britain's world No. 1 Laura Davies has an appreciative gallery yesterday as she practises for the Solheim Cup match against the United States. At stake is the only major trophy the Americans have not ceded to a European team. Full story, page 15

Tailor made for a role in midfield



Jim White

IT IS now official: the "Most Stylish Man In Britain" is a footballer. At yesterday's Menswear Awards ceremony, held in the Park Lane Hotel, Jamie Redknapp pipped Ruud Gullit to the coveted title. It could not have been closer, apparently; Redknapp won it by a lapel difference. No one at the ceremony seemed surprised that a footballer rather than, say, a pop singer or film star was regarded as, in the words of the compere, "the kind of man the youth of today looks to as a style icon". According to Mike Souter, editor of FHM, the fashion magazine sponsoring the event, footballers are the snappiest dressers in Britain. Designers, he said, anxious for instantly recognisable clothes-horses, pursue them constantly. Paul Smith kitted out the England team with their off-duty outfits in Euro 96. Hugo Boss took on Manchester United, and Wayne Hemingway of Red Or Dead was so keen on a connection with football that he designed this season's kit for Chelsea City. As yet, though, Souter did not know of anyone seeking to tailor a range around Neville Southall.

with cash, drowning in free time, footballers these days have become leading experts in tailoring. Ask a Premiership midfielder whether he prefers four or five across the middle and, more often than not, he will assume you are referring to the number of buttocks on his jacket. In a revealing profile for the Manchester United Video Magazine last year Lee Sharpe invited the cameras into his lovely home. One room was lined with wardrobes. This, the player said, opening a cupboard door to reveal acres of linens, was a special room, the place where he kept his jumpers. Such a wanton display of trippery, one felt at the time, was not the best way to endear Sharpe to Alex Ferguson with his film-like Puritan soul and a blazer and grey slacks for every occasion. How relieved, after leaving Fergie, Sharpe must have been to see the elegant George Graham smooth into Elland Road: so much easier to relate to a manager who understands the fundamental human need to go out and spend £200 on a cardigan. Significantly Graham did not select Sharpe for his first match in charge at the club. Official word was that the player was injured, but the astute will surmise that Graham had sent him out on a scouting mission scouring Leeds for outlets stocking Cerruti and Tommy Hilfinger.

Jilted Lee may now look abroad for City

Ian Ross on the Maine Road chairman's latest rebuff in his search for a manager

THE managership of Manchester City was all but confirmed as the most undesirable job in English football yesterday when Dave Bassett announced that he would remain with Crystal Palace.

charge at Maine Road, Bassett changed his mind to plunge City still further into turmoil. Bassett is the third high-profile manager to turn down the chance to follow Alan Ball, who resigned last month three games into the season. Only eight hours after saying he was willing to take

overtures before succeeding Howard Wilkinson at Leeds United last week, and Howard Kendall, the former City manager now in charge at Sheffield United, snubbed two formal approaches from Lee and his fellow directors. With City's current caretaker manager Asa Hartford

adamant that he does not want the job on a full-time basis, Lee finds himself back at square one almost a month after Ball's departure. Lee said Bassett had verbally accepted the invitation late on Wednesday night. Lee went to bed believing his embarrassing search for a manager was finally at an end, only to be awoken at 7.05am by the phone call from Bassett.

"Dave accepted the job but then rang and said he changed his mind overnight. I am flabbergasted. He even discussed players with me; he gave me a definite yes that he wanted the job and told me to go out and buy [a player] this morning." Lee rejected claims that would-be occupants of the Maine Road hot seat had been put off because he had a reputation for interfering in the dressing room. "I am astonished at this claim," he said. "You can ask my previous manager Brian Horton. I do not interfere with the manager, but if a

manager asked me for my opinion obviously I would give it." Bassett's decision came 36 hours after City had been humiliated by the Third Division side Lincoln City, losing 4-1 in a Coca-Cola Cup tie. "Francis Lee was disappointed. He was devastated," said Bassett. "I had to think long and hard but believe I have reached the professionally correct decision. I have started a job at Selhurst Park and would like to finish it." With debts of around £20 million, an injury-ravaged senior squad of debatable quality and increasingly impatient supporters, City are moving swiftly towards another major crisis. This morning Lee will find himself drawing up yet another shortlist of prospective candidates and, though the names of Port Vale's John Rudge, Stoke City's Lou Macari and Barnsley's Danny Wilson are likely to feature, he may now decide to take his search abroad.

THIS is the difference between now and the Seventies: since the average Premiership footballer buys a jacket every other day, the law of averages dictates that he must occasionally get his hands on something stylish; though the law of averages seems to have given a wide berth to Barry Venison, John Barnes and the entire Liverpool squad at this year's Cup final. Oddly for the "most stylish man in Britain", the deal to supply vanilla-coloured suits to Liverpool that day was brokered by Redknapp. Sadly, as they say on these occasions, he could not be at the ceremony yesterday to offer his explanation for that aberration. He sent along Louise, the pop singer described as "his close personal friend", to pick up the award on his behalf. Louise, wearing a black dress cut so low on the midriff it might have been designed by a plumber, explained that Jamie was "completely honoured to win this award, which means so much to him". She did not say why he could not be there, out buying clothes, presumably.

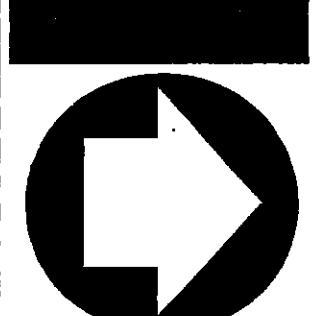
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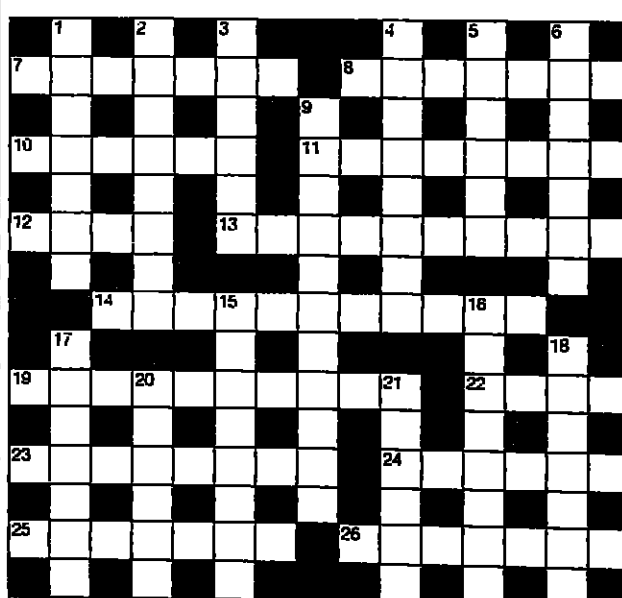


Lyle Lovett is as famously lop-sided as ever, but it's his combination of discreet urban style and a permanent expression of amused incredulity that makes him such an enduring focus of interest. Adam Sweeting

Friday Review Page 10

Guardian Crossword No 20,763

Set by Rufus

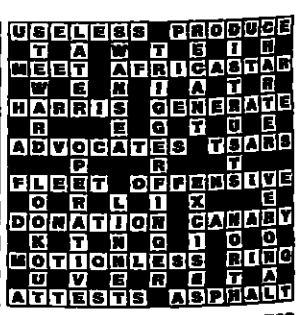


Across

- 7 Crying, having finally got a reprimand (7)
- 8 Hidden — but not from a gunman? (7)
- 10 Credit is twice provided in an emergency (6)
- 11 Repeatedly try to express approval (4)
- 12 Branch member (4)
- 13 Pink gin ran out, seen on the table (5,4)
- 14 Its occupant won't stand for revolution (5,5)
- 19 Put on guard from a combination of fear and wonder (10)
- 22 Notice an awkward situation (4)
- 23 Barrels found around ancient dumps (8)
- 24 Famous film-star who is around no more (6)

Down

- 1 Breach code of the Israelites (7)
- 2 Travel through East End district with offensive weapon (8)
- 3 The bay of the hounds? (6)
- 4 Russian comrade (8)
- 5 It limits the movement of stock (6)
- 6 Recovers one's possession? (7)
- 9 Rows in forms that will please the eye (11)
- 15 Engineer Davis cut bridges (8)
- 16 The point in folly that becomes madness (8)
- 17 City company gains a record couple of points (7)



CROSSWORD SOLUTION 20,762

- 18 Scotsman going it alone; was he wise? (7)
- 20 Last though almost sure to finish on top (6)
- 21 Cheeky, but attractive, feature (6)

Solution tomorrow

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